

BIBLICAL HERMENEUTIC PRINCIPLES OF HOLISTIC HEALTH IN
LAURINBURG MOUNT OLIVE SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ILLUSTRATIONS	vi
ABBREVIATIONS	vii
EPIGRAPH.....	viii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER	
1. MINISTRY FOCUS	5
2. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	32
3. HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS	60
4. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	95
5. INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS.....	113
6. PROJECT ANALYSIS.....	132
APPENDIX	
A. TREATMENT INTERVENTION PSALMS 103:1-3.....	170
B. TREATMENT INTERVENTION 3 JOHN 1:1-2	177
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	184

ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this dissertation is to examine how a Biblical Hermeneutic of holistic health may bring changes to the seeming current disconnect between physical health and holistic health practices in Laurinburg, NC. Mount Olive Seventh Day Adventist Church. Based on the pretest questionnaire, their understanding of Psalm 103:1-3 and 3John 1:1-2 strongly suggests they do not understand Biblical holistic wellness. The posttest qualitative analysis shows that after treatments, the members' comprehension and practices greatly improved. Finally, this thesis offers multiple strategies to implement the Biblical Hermeneutic principles of holistic health and wellness to the church and the community.

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I extend and express my profound copious love and gratitude to my wife, Murticia Curtis, for her loving support. You believed in me and supported me when I grapple with the magnanimity of this research. I thank God for my beautiful children, Randy Jr, and Candiss. Moreover, I thank God for the memory of my deceased parents, Austin and Louise, and the early foundation and values they inculcated in me.

I would first like to thank my supervisors, Leroy Cothran and Dr. Randy Grimes, whose expertise was invaluable in formulating the research questions and methodology. I want to acknowledge my colleague and friend Dr. Lolydston Burton and his wife, Dr. Sheila Burton, for their excellent collaboration. I want to thank my brother, Austin Curtis, for his support and encouragement. I would particularly like to single out my initial supervisor, Dr. Reginald Dawkins, for encouragement and support, and valuable guidance throughout my studies.

I also thank the Lord for the support and encouragement of the South Atlantic Conference of SDA. I am overflowing with gratefulness when I consider the two assemblies: pastor, the Mount Olive SDA church, Laurinburg, NC, and the Southern Pines SDA Church. They petitioned God for me. They affirmed me repeatedly when I lectured and showed such an enormous amount of passion for Holistic-Wellness. I am thankful for you—much love to you for your understanding and petitions and intercessory on my behalf.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Tables

1.1 Psalm 103:1-5 Forgiveness/Healing Pre-Intervention Survey Questions.....	140
1.2 3 John 2:1-2 Healing Pre-Intervention Survey Question.....	142

Figures

1.1 Post-Intervention Treatment Question # 1	149
1.2 Post-Intervention Treatment Question # 2	151
1.3 Post-Intervention Treatment Question # 3	153
1.4 Higher and Lower Brain	154
1.5 The Stress Response System Thinking Brain and Emotional Brain.....	155
1.6 The Stress Respose System Thinking Brain and Emotional Brain.....	156
1.7 Post-Intervention Treatment Question #4 Data	159
1.8 Post-Intervention Treatment Question #5 Data	161
1.9 The Higher Brain and Lower Brain Under Stress.....	163
1.10 Watching Brain Patterns When Forgiving	164

ABBREVIATIONS

NRSV New Revised Standard Version

SDV Seventh Day Adventist

By cleansing your body on a regular basis and eliminating as many toxins as possible from your environment, your body can begin to heal itself, prevent disease, and become stronger and more resilient than you ever dreamed possible.

—Edward Group, III, *Chiro One*

INTRODUCTION

The problem within my current ministry praxis is that many members do not have a Biblical understanding of what constitutes Biblical holistic health and wellness. They see holistic health merely as eliminating certain objectional dietary elements from their food practice. Moreover, their view is that the employment of certain health food elements is enough. They do not see much integration or correlation with holistic wellness that encompasses a clear mind body soul connection. In that context, they do not understand the relationship between forgiveness and holistic wellness as a holistic wellness component.

The thesis statement is that the purpose of the research is to propose a solution of resolution to this problem in light of the apparent absence of a biblical-holistic hermeneutic of health and wellness in the MT Olive—Laurinburg, North Carolina, Seventh-Day Adventist church (LNCSDA), how can it be shown that: The normative impetus of a Biblical-Hermeneutic of holistic health, in body, mind, and soul brings about a changed praxis in the MT Olive—LNCSDA church regarding holistic health and wellness and effective discipleship and ministry in the MT Olive—LNCSDA church and the community? The specific texts to exegete the Biblical hermeneutic form is Psalm 103:2-5 and 3 John 1:1-2 in the biblical Canon. Andrews ¹ articulated the concept that:

¹ Dale Andrews, *Practical Theology for Black Churches: Bridging Black Theology and African American Folk Religion* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 1.

The term “Practical Theology” strikes the ear as an oxymoron. The chasms that stretch between the discipline of theology and our ordinary lives of faith do not frequently appear to be very clear concise.

Methodology and Research Design

The connotations and denotations of the phrase Practical Theology have lost some of its oxymoronic personality in many academic circles since Dale Andrew’s² published his Practical Theology for Black Churches. His recognition of the chasm between theology’s academic discipline and the lived actualities of holistic health in the faith creates great tension to be reconciled.

Questions arising from this problem statement:

1. How may the pretest questioner and descriptive empirical analysis of the data capture and convey what the conflict over contemporary holistic health practices in Laurinburg SDA church is all about?

2. How can an interpretive data analysis of the pretest in a broader framework be explanatory—why these patterns and practices of a lack of holistic health practices in Laurinburg SDA church affect the church’s core mission and ministry?

3. How might holistic biblical-hermeneutic principles from the Bible and other sources be used as a normative treatment and intervention guide to critically assess and reform contemporary unhealthy practices in the Laurinburg SDA church?

² Andrews, *Practical Theology for Black Churches*, 1-2.

4. How might post-test questioner data analysis yield viable content of how to shape this area of treatment and intervention praxis of contemporary health practice through critical theoretical reflection to more fully embody the normative commitments of holistic biblical-hermeneutic, theological traditions methods of the Laurinburg, NC Mount Olive Seventh Day Adventist church?

The strategies of inquiry will proceed along the lines of a qualitative and mixed method. The research plan in this section engages outcomes around the ensuing:

- (1) The people, or church to investigate on a descriptive plane.
- (2) The precise methods to use to collect information.
- (3) The individuals that will conduct the research are documented and validated.
- (4) The order of steps will be followed to carry out the project in a specific time frame.

Osmer lists and concisely explains five methods of empirical research: interviews, participant observation, artifact examination, demographic analysis, and focus groups. He also offers four steps in the experimental research process: (a) data assemblage, (b) data dictation, (c) data evaluation and interpretation, and (d) research reporting. In the data analysis phase, the objective is to discover patterns and themes in the data.

There is a challenge confronting descriptive-empirical research. The various problems facing the descriptive-empirical method that the researcher must be cognizance of to maintain validity are: (a) Depiction: reflection itself is theory-laden, so the representation of data is never purely or solely factual; and (b) Legitimation and

validation: the criteria for legitimizing research vary, depending on the kind of investigation and its driving purpose.³

In chapter one, the researcher will chronicle and draft the various narratives that have shaped and influenced my life and ministry. In chapter two, the research will execute an exegesis of the fundamental primary texts (Psalm, 103:1-5 and 3John 2:1-2) that drive the biblical foundations of the normative viewpoints that can help form a biblical hermeneutic of holistic wellness. Chapter three, the research will sketch the historical antecedents to physical and integrated wellness in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. In chapter four the movements will mine the theological foundations of health in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The movements in chapter five, will examine interdisciplinary foundations and how they operate to illuminate the relationship between, body, mind and soul holistic wellness. Finally, in chapter six the researcher will engage in data pre-test data analysis and post-test data analysis to assess the efficacy of the various treatments that emerged from the survey data. Moreover, the research postulates strategies to implement to affect change in Laurinburg, North Carolina, Mount, Olive, Seventh Day Adventist church, and the Christian community and the local community.

In this section, the researcher seeks to develop a strategy for change flowing from normative points of view. Osmer's methodology and framework and those mentioned above will be the primary methodology employed as a blueprint to compass this study.

³ Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 57-58.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

The pilgrimage that colors this doctoral project emanates from long-standing feelings of abandonment at a young age. I have a strong and assertive personality that, in many ways, has served me well. In many ways, my life defines a spiritual and psychological tension about whom I wanted to become in life. I had an excellent family support structure. My father was very instrumental in laying the foundation for knowing who our family was by utilizing the visitation method. We visited in the formative years at least once every other weekend. My mother made sure we had a spiritual background. Our religious orientation is in a Pentecostal Holiness tradition. I always was critical about how I could fit in this church tradition.

I am intelligent and passionate, a good listener, have a pretty good sense of humor. I have learned many skills and done good work as a pastor/ chaplain. I live in a pretty good community. I am convinced that I have accomplished many opportunities in helping many others in my short lifespan. I am married to Murticia, who is very loving and charming and knows how to treat her husband with respect and love. I do likewise to her with tender care. This bond has kept us together for over thirty-three years. In the face of all of this, I have faced the challenge of balancing pastoral ministry and chaplain ministry. I must be able to fine-tune my time so that I can be balanced. Self-care

management has been a challenge for my family and me. I had to learn the how-to of spending that qualitative time with family and church family and between chaplain/wife. Jesus' model was to come aside and rest awhile.

Randy Curtis was born on June 5, 1956, in Wendell, NC. My parents are Austin and Louise Curtis. I am the third child out of nine. My mother's second child Wilard Glen died of crib death. My mother said, "She earnestly prayed for another boy, and she got a Randy." That makes me feel exceptional out of three boys and six girls.

I felt strong and honored to take the place of my brother Wilard Glen. He adored my father and my father's mother, Annie Mae Harris Curtis. She is from the Halawa Saponi Indians in Holister, North Carolina. He had the spitting resemblance of a Saponi Indian. He had the built and the looks of my father and grandmother and curly hair of his grandmother Annie Mae Harris Curtis. Little that I knew, I was a cross between my mother, father, and uncle. I was all Randy. A bubbling personality.

My father sharecropped on seventeen farms before we moved to Raleigh, North Carolina. We moved on my father-in-law mule and wagon from Middlesex, North Carolina. His occupation changed in his move to Raleigh. His career became an auto mechanic. He was very good at this trade in carrying for his family. My mother was a homemaker until she found work in the housekeeping department at the different hotel chains such as Hilton and others. Her final employment was *Wake Med hospital*. My parent's income helped take care of 9 children, plus many other relatives.

I like to look at and explore my childhood and who had significant influences on me. As I look back in life, I can remember my parents moving from rural North Carolina to Raleigh, North Carolina. My early childhood life took off like a rocket. I was regular,

like most kids. I loved to explore places and things. In early childhood, my brother Austin had a significant influence on my life. He helps mold and shapes my character. I looked to him for guidance and protection. I can remember us always getting up early in the morning. Our day generally began at about 5:00 am.

We generally had a plan for what we were going to do for today. I remember early one morning going to a place called *Montgomery Ward*. This day I will never forget because my older brother introduces me to alcohol. I was just five years old. When I turned the bottle up, I took a sip. Then I felt something go down like fire. I turned it up again, and I begin to enjoy the bubbling in my stomach. It seems like this was designed for me. At an early age, I found ways to get more drinking opportunities from drinking my father's alcohol. I learned at an early age how to hold my liquor. I was able to do this undercover until I was the legal age to drink. Oh, how good it was to take a drink from my father's stash. What I observed from him drinking, I could do ten times better.

My mother's influence in my life as a child was to make sure that all her children would be saved in God's kingdom. I remember her taking us to this Pentecostal Holiness Church seems like every evening for revival. I did not understand why they had to jump around and praise Jesus. The people in this church did much shouting and chanting. My mother and her older sister put on a shouting contest every Sunday. I observed people falling out in the church. They said they are saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost and speak in unknown tongues. I honestly did not feel the love in all this church-going.

Several pivotal moments in my life help me to change my mind about my spiritual struggle. We used to walk about five miles to church. On this day, we stopped by this

place where there were chemicals. We were throwing dirt balls in this water. It was splashing on our clothes. When we arrive at the church, we begin to itch and scratch. I told the other young men with me to pretend like we have the Holy Ghost. It was not funny because this Holy Ghost made you itch. The next day I found out that we encountered acid water. My clothes had holes in my pants and shirt. Shortly after that event, I played sick, and at the age of eleven, I no longer attended church. The only time I went was on special holidays. I felt it was time to do my own thing.

At the age of fourteen, I was in Jr High School. It was time to make our classroom introduction. A young man in the classroom said he had the same birthday that I had. I told him that it could not possibly be. I told him the only way to prove it was to bring his birth certificate to school. He got a birth certificate, and I was amazed. I asked the young man where he lived, and he told me his neighborhood, and I was in shock about it. I could look down the hill and see his house. We became like brothers. We went to Jr High School together, played sports together, and worked together for a short time. When my friend dropped out of high school and went into the Navy, I felt very lonely.

I turned to the Alcohol and Marijuana to fill that void of my friendship. One Saturday evening, there was a party in my community at my house. I had been drinking very heavily and utilized marijuana. I felt like I was “King Kong;” nothing could stop me. I had over 200 people running at this party. It was my neighbor’s party. I was picking on people that evening. My friend, who stood six feet and seven inches tall, tried to restrain me. He put me in a full nelson, and I flipped him over my head, and he landed on the ground. I pulled my hawk blade out, and I could remember me saying out loud, come on, who wants some. I will mess you up. Somehow the news got to my father. My father

was able to get me into the house. I exclaimed to him that I was the man. I said it on several occasions. He said, since you say you are the man, put your fingers between mine. I placed my fingers on him, and I felt pain like I never experienced before. He bent my fingers back, and I threw upon him. He then placed me in the shower. I had the worst hangover that I ever experience. The next day I tried to go to work with a significant pounding of my head. I could not work, so I came back home. This event was a turning point for me. It was time for me to make a change in my life.

Someone told me that I need to have Jesus in my life. I bought me a bible, and I begin to read the bible chapter by chapter. I was not sure where I was going with all this bible reading, but I knew that God was somewhere out there for me. I was feeling hurt, and I had injured many people that evening. I was looking for some form of reconciliation. Help and hope we are on the way. My friend, who had gone to the military, was on his way out of the military. The same friend who had gone away was returning home. He was a different person. The difference he had in his life was that he had allowed Jesus to come into his life. He shared with me what God had done for him. I was eager and hungry to listen to what he had to say about Jesus. He was very excited about his new experience. He told me how he was trying to get out of the Navy by keeping Sunday as a worship day. He said a Roman Catholic chaplain told him he could get out of the Navy by keeping Saturday as a day of prayer. The result was he could get an honorable discharge from the Navy for keeping Saturday as a day of worship. He became a Seventh-day Adventist.

I had never heard of that before. He introduced me to a Seventh-day Adventist church in Raleigh, North Carolina. I begin to inquire about what Seventh-day Adventists

believe. In Durham, North Carolina, they had a tent crusade. The theme in this crusade was Jesus Is the Answer for The World Today. There were compelling preaching and gospel singing. The evangelist at that time was Barry Black. I went to this crusade every night for two weeks. I was taking the Amazing Facts Bible studies. I was very impressed. When it was time to take my stand for Christ in my life, I said, yes! In 1975 September, I gave my life to Christ, and I have not looked back. After going down to the watery grave in Durham, North Carolina, I transferred my membership to the Raleigh Church. Several years later, I made my mind up to further my education at Oakwood College.

I went there to become a minister of the gospel — what a valuable experience for me. The training I received at this school was second to none. I remembered what the members of the Raleigh church told me, books are first, and all other activities come later. I did my best to stay on point. One of the best groups that I became a member of was the Literature Evangelist. This group was able to sell Christian literature to pay for your schooling. It gave me an opportunity for Christian leadership and development. I was able to pay for most of my tuition for four years. One of my highlights, while I was attending Oakwood College was mission services to South Korea. This experience in South Korea gave me an excellent opportunity for growth and leadership. I spent sixteen months of life as a student missionary in Seoul and Kwangu, Korea. I had the privilege of teaching five conversational English classes and one Bible class. This was an excellent opportunity for me to learn about another culture and share my culture with the students. Every week we had opportunities to travel to different places in Korea. Most of our students in our language schools were in college or business professionals.

The language school in Seoul, Korea, where I worked, had at least 15 student missionaries from diverse countries that worked at different schools. I had the privilege of living on the sight at the school. We had the benefit of having a maid that cooked our food and washed our clothes. For a moment, I felt unique for this style of living. I had to remain faithful to my mission overseas. Our primary objective of this mission trip was also to point others to Christ through our Evangelist crusades on the weekend. This happens at least once a quarter. There was rioting in South Korea. This just reminded me of the African American experience in the sixties. I adjusted accordingly. The situation was that the president of South Korea was assassinated. The country was on high alert. They call the death of the president the last supper. The general took over the country. The people were terrified of the new leadership. They called him a dictator. The general sent 10,000 troops to Kwangu Korea. The citizens were rioting and had taken over the city. I was afraid of the student missionaries and civilians in Kwangu. The soldiers were able to take the city back from the civilians. There were many casualties. Little did I know that I was about to be sent to Kwangu Korea. This is where I spent the last six months in Korea. When I arrived in Kwangu, Korea, there was still tension between the civilians and the military. Many of my new students at the language school were upset about what had happened in their nation. Several of my students wanted me to talk about the struggles we had in America. My students wanted me to talk about Malcolm X and the effort he had in America. I told my students that I am not allowed to talk about politics. If a government official finds me talking about politics, they will deport me. It was quite a challenge to help my students diffuse their anger. I had to remind myself of this new assignment, my real purpose for coming overseas.

It was a transitioning time. I became the new director of the language school for the next four months. It was quite a challenge. The former director missionary trained me for two months. We had to look to God for wisdom and guidance with a lot of anger and mistrust between the civilians and the military. Some of my students that I taught conversational English to was in the military. God will never leave you nor forsake you. He made a way out of no way.

In the next four months, I provided the Kwangu Seventh-day Adventist Language School the best leadership possible. With a new staff of three student missionaries. I was able to orient them and get them ready to teach our 400 students. One high light in Kwangu, Korea, was when I attended a middle school on Friday. I rode my bike on this trip to a rural area. The students at this middle school thought I was Muhammad Ali. I had the box haircut, and I weighed about 178 pounds. It started with a few autographs. Then they began to chant “Ali,” “Ali.” I did the Ali shuffle and floated around a little bit. I said, floats like a butterfly and sting like a bee. The crowd was growing to around 200 students. I got tired of signing signatures. I asked two of the young men to help me escape from the crowd. The autograph I was signing was Randy Curtis and RC. As I left, the group was following behind with the chant “Ali,” “Ali.” I was finally able to get away. I tried to explain to them I was not Ali. They did not hear that.

I finished my tour in Kwangu, Korea, and returned to the United States. The love and warmth of being in Korea were gone. I experienced cultural shock when I return to America. It was business as usual. After a few months back, things turn to normalcy. I went home to Raleigh, North Carolina, for a couple of weeks. Then I return to Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama, to finish my undergraduate studies. I was glad to meet

other missionaries that had went to other countries. We all had many exciting stories to tell. Now I was able to train and recruit others who had a desire to go to Korea. If I had to do it again, I would say yes. This Korea mission helped me to become more culturally diverse.

The student missionary association at Oakwood College sent a group of former student missionaries to Washington, DC, to meet with other ministers from around the country. Oakwood sent five people on this trip. Three males and two females. We utilized the transportation of one of the professors of Oakwood College. We were able to look at the student missionary program's strengths and weaknesses from all the Seventh-day Adventist Schools. I think this was a good idea so we can improve our student missionary programs.

After attending this event in Washington, DC, we fueled up and headed back to Oakwood College. On the outskirts of South Pittsburg, Tennessee city limit, it was my turn to drive. We were pulled over by the South Pittsburg Tennessee police officers. They said, "Where is your license tag?" I explain to them that it had fallen off. It is a professor's car from Oakwood College. The officer said, ok, be careful. We had 30 miles to reach Scottsboro, Alabama. When we arrived in Scottsboro, Alabama, it was a significant turn of events. We were pulled over by three police cars.

I looked across on the other side of the highway, and there was a police car with his weapon already drawn. When I got out of the vehicle, I automatically put my hand on top of the car and spread my legs. The front seat passenger woke up, looking at a 38 special in his face. I felt something go on the back of my neck. I do not know what I was thinking about, but I reached back with spontaneity and felt the gun's nozzle on my neck.

I put my hands back up on top of the car immediately. The police officers searched the remainder of the people in the car's back seat, where there were two females and a male. I asked the police officer what the reason for this stop was. They said, "The South Pittsburg Tennessee police officers said there is a runaway car speeding your way, and we cannot catch it." I informed the police officer that we are from Oakwood College, and we are returning from a trip to Washington, DC. The police officers said we are only responding to what was communicated to us. No ticket was served. They just gave a brief apology. I was fired up after this event. I was ready to march on the police department of Scottsboro and South Pittsburg, Tennessee.

After returning to Oakwood College, I immediately sat down with our advisor (E. E. Cleveland) the next day and explained what transpired. This happened in 1981. I was ready to get an attorney and sue both police departments. E.E. Cleveland advise me to let him handle it. He said, "If you try to handle this the legal way, it will make it very hard for the students that travel up North." I was traumatized, and I wanted immediate satisfaction. It took me a while to begin to heal — what a way to be welcomed home from Korea. I felt like getting on a plane and returning; God had another plan for me. I was a pretty good athlete in 1981. I was an early riser, and I tried to diffuse the situation by turning my negative energy into positive energy. My relationship with God was tight. I arose by 3 in the morning and had my talk with God. By five am in the morning, I ran five miles, and in the evening, I ran five miles. I generally was in bed before 10 pm. This year I played intramural basketball. I felt my best. I played in the A league. Many of the basketball players did not know my routine. I was able to jump up and stuff the basketball with both hands. My stamina was off the chart. I am not just playing

basketball. I put God first. He was my friend and my healer. This year my team made it to the championship game. We were the underdog. That was fine with me. They had all the stars. It is not how to start the race, but how you finish. We finished the basketball season as the A-league champions. Some said that we had a lucky game. I looked at it as teamwork that accomplishes this objective. This event helped me to almost forget about my Scottsboro incident.

While matriculating academically and my spiritual journey at Oakwood College, I began to look for a life partner. If you pray three times a day now, it is time to pray nine times a day. It was in 1982 when I started dating around different women. It was not until 1983 that I laid my eyes on what I felt was compatible with my personality. I needed a life partner that was fun to be with and who had a relationship with God. I was dating a young lady before I met my life partner. I did not think she was the right fit for me. I brought closure to that relationship and moved on.

My roommate is the one that set me up for meeting my life partner to be. I can remember the first date we had; we went to an Arcade in Huntsville. My life partner thought she was pretty good at playing Pac-man. I mean, she was good at this game. I will give her the benefit of the doubt. She spanked me good. It did not help that I was wearing uncomfortable shoes. After this date, we started having devotions together.

I was twenty-five when we met. I prayed to God for guidance in this relationship. We were like two peas in a pod, and we sincerely enjoyed one another company. I am from Raleigh, North Carolina, and she was from Staten Island, New York. We had many more enjoyable days together. I honestly was beginning to bond with her and fall in love after several months of dating. When I met her family, I felt at home with her brothers

and sisters. They were very spiritual, and I thought I could connect with them. I asked the question to her mother (her father had died). I want to be wed to your daughter. Her mother had six girls and two boys.; the same as my family. This child was her baby. Her mother responds, if you genuinely love my baby and take care of her, you can marry her. I was so excited about the reaction I was jumping for joy. She said yes.

In my last year of college, on March 14, 1984, we got married. I was twenty-eight years old, and she was twenty years old. I graduated in June of 1984, and we left Huntsville, Alabama, and headed to Staten Island, New York. This was indeed a faith journey for me heading to New York without a job on site. By God's grace, my brother-in-law helped me get employed with the city of New York. I drove city vehicles and eventually became an outreach caseworker for the city of New York homeless population. My wife had a job shortly for a while until she had a baby on November 4.

We named her Candiss. She was born in Staten Island hospital. I was one happy father. I was very protective of her. I guess a father had to make sure his child was well taken care of. In 1986 my wife had her second child. We named him Randy Jr. If you think I was protective of the first, it was even more severe for my son. I would let no one keep them. I switch my job to the night shift to have round the clock coverage, so we do not have to have babysitting services. I remember the days of sitting around in Silver Lake Park, letting my children run around and enjoy themselves. This took a toll on my body eventually, and we hired a babysitter in the family. It was mainly a trust issue for me.

I enjoyed raising my children in New York because they had an opportunity to be with family. My wife and children were the apples of my eye. We had family devotion as

often as we could. We bonded with my wife's family until October of 1987. We decided to return to Huntsville, Alabama, to raise our children. One of the main reasons for leaving New York was that we got robbed. It did not feel safe anymore. We made our move, and I had to make another adjustment to employment. Temporarily, I worked on a 120-acre farm. I was working with inner-city youth in helping to harvest vegetables. This was short-term employment until I found a job at the Monroe Office Supply Company. Shortly after being hired there, I entered the Clinical Pastoral Education Program at Huntsville Hospital in November of 1989. On my first day of chaplaincy, I was truly tested. God allowed a tornado to come through Huntsville, Alabama.

My first concern was my family's safety. I was trying to leave the hospital fast. When I got downstairs, the floor was shifting underneath my foot. The tornado had hooked to the top of the hospital, trying to pull it off its foundation. It was a praying time through this storm. I found out that my wife and children were okay. There was much significant damage from this storm. One of the hospital surgeons drove right into the storm and had the bone in his arm sucked out from the tornado's wind. I said God must have something compelling to do in chaplaincy. This unit of the chaplaincy was for five months. Once I completed this unit in chaplaincy, I was informed that I needed more education than a Bachelor's Degree to advance. You need a Master of Divinity Degree is required if you would like to become a full-time chaplain. I was accepted into Adventist Seminary in Berrien Springs, Michigan, in 1990. It is time to pack up and move again. I do not know about the cost of tuition and moving my family into a frigid climate. This is another faith-move.

In 1990 my family and I moved to Berrien Springs, Michigan, at Andrews University for the M.Div. Degree. I believe with all my heart that God would take my family and me through this journey. My family had to make their adjustment to a new way of life. My wife, with her administrative skills, was employed at Andrews University. My daughter was old enough to start school, and my son was five years old. I adjusted to new friends at Andrews University and met many old friends from Oakwood College. I was in my early thirties when I attended the Seminary. I asked God to guide me through this education for the next three years and keep my family together. It was a balancing act in keeping the family together and focusing on the books. With the help of God, he made things happen. My wife made many friends at the seminary. She also launches out in her educational pursuit to become a nurse.

I thought that was fantastic. I was very proud of her. I remember my children bonding with other Seminarian children. One of my highlights was my five-year-old son running a 5-k race and me, and he completed it — the time passed by quick in this educational pursuit. I received my M.Div. in June of 1993, and my wife had her LPN degree. Now it was time to move forward to my next level of chaplaincy training. I applied to a Clinical Pastoral Education Program in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and Got accepted into their program. My start date was January 1994. It is time to take that next move in a lifetime to pack up the car and move to Arkansas. The name of the hospital was Jefferson Regional Medical Center. My goal in this adventure was to complete the four-units of Clinical Pastoral Education and apply for a chaplain position somewhere on the east coast.

This was another faith move and an adjustment for the family. I was beginning to feel like Abraham. It made me think of the song we have Come this Far by faith leaning on the Lord. Trusting in His holy word, He never failed us yet. OH, cannot turn around. We come this far by Faith. I was able to meet the Clinical Pastoral Educational Supervisor to receive my marching orders for the year. My wife was able to be employed at Jefferson Regional Medical center. We adjusted our children in school. It was time now to find a home church. We found that with no problem. I helped in the church as a local Elder when I was able. As a chaplain resident, we had weekly on call duty rotation, and often, if you are not careful, you would get burned out. I did my best to keep a balance. You must save that family time to love one another. The family is essential to me. My father puts that on me. Time in this chaplain program flew by.

They wanted me to stay for another year as Senior Chaplain after I completed the course. I received five units of Clinical Pastoral Education. The Clinical Pastoral Education Program sent me on a trip to a conference called Racial Ethnic Minority Chaplains. This group helped educate the minority chaplains to become Clinical Pastoral Supervisors. It was good learning for me. I desired to become a staff chaplain. I applied for a position in Greenville, North Carolina. I went for an interview, and they accepted me at Vidant Hospital. Praise God, and it is time to work in my field now. Instead, it is time to pack up to move to Greenville, NC. Before I left Arkansas, I purchased a little Honda at a sheriff auction for 500.00. The auctioneer told me by the way this Honda hatchback was used as the getaway car in New York's first World Trade Center bombing. He showed me the name of the person arrested on the car title; he was a Muslim. I pulled the vehicle with me to Greenville, North Carolina.

What a great birthday gift. June of 1995 to start my journey in Greenville, North Carolina, as a staff chaplain at Pitt Memorial Hospital. You would have thought I had arrived at the Promised Land. Now I can indeed settle down and raise my family. God begins to open many doors I could not see. He helped my wife get employed as a nurse at the hospital. He helped my children to get an education at a Seventh-day Adventist Church School. I was praising God for his goodness. I got connected to the South Atlantic Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. This was the headquarters that covered North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. They were glad to welcome me on board and gave me a church assignment with two small churches. I was ordained as a Seventh-day Adventist minister in 1996 in Augusta — what Georgia. I was glad to get a stipend for pastoring those two churches. The distance was a challenge for me. One of the churches was 105 miles away Lillington Seventh-day Adventist Church and Clinton Seventh-day Adventist Church were 75 miles away. It was helpful to pastor both churches but challenging. I requested a closer assignment. It was too much wear and tore on my family and me. I worked as a hospital chaplain, and I had to learn how to balance my family and me. I stayed with those two churches for two years and six months.

My next assignment was in Washington, NC. (Maranatha Seventh-day Adventist Church.) This church was small and had good-hearted members. I had some good memories and some challenging memories. I pastored this church for seven years; on March 8, 2005, I was ready to transition to another district. I had my neighbor's 90-foot pine tree fall on my house. It was considered an act of God. Seventy-five miles an hour, the wind came and blew that right at my home. My son gave me a call at work. I honestly was traumatized. He hooked school that day and said he thought it was an earthquake. I

came home and saw it for myself. I went to my neighbor's house, and he gave me his insurance company. They said they were not responsible. I called my insurance company and started a litigation process. On the same day of this tree falling, my grandson was born Mosai (meaning something from the sky in Kenya).

We were out of this home for a year. I had a little too much on the plate at this time. I had to make some adjustments in life. I wrote a letter to the South Atlantic Adventist president to thank him for allowing me to serve, but I am resigning from pastoring. He accepted my request. God was helping me to step back and take some time for healing. My neighbor hardly spoke to me at all. I always thought he was a little strange. We worked at the same hospital and hardly ever say anything to me. I wrestle with that biblical text love thy neighbor as thyself (Mk 12:31).

I needed more time to deal with my grief and loss. In 2009 I received a call that my father fell at home and broke his neck. I spent time with him at the hospital; it seemed like a long time for healing. I was able to go to several doctor appointments with him after he came out of the hospital. Later, he was having therapy and fell and broke his hip at home. He was going through physical and moral distress. He was in and out of the hospital for contacting mercer. On one visit to the hospital, he told me, you know that I am not going to be here long.

I have everything written out for my funeral. I want you to do my eulogy. I want you to do something for me. Please go to your mother and ask her to forgive me for anything that I have done to her. I took a deep swallow. Okay, dad, I will do that for you. I went to my mother and told her what her former husband requested. My mother told me to go back to your father and tell him I forgive him. My father was at peace after I shared

that news with him. Several weeks after that encounter with my father, he died. What a caring father he was to many people. I am very thankful for all he has done for our family. He will be missed, and I pray and hope to meet him in heaven. It was hard to walk to say goodbye to someone you truly loved and cared about. My first year of grief was challenging in missing him. Each day and year, get a little better. Three years had passed by, and I was ready to move forward in contemplating helping with the South Atlantic Conference in working as an interim pastor in Greenville, NC, for about 6 months. I felt pretty good about this transition. At the tender age of 56, I was equipped enough to pastor and work as a staff chaplain. It was a beautiful size church with about 80 members on the books.

On October 15, 2012, I was on my way to work as a staff chaplain. I was almost at my job at 7:15 a.m. I was beginning to make my turn in a 2002 Toyota Sequoia in the left lane when I noticed this red medium size pickup almost at the driver's door. I said to myself that if I do not floor this vehicle, I will die on impact. I hit the gas with all my might. The red pickup truck struck the left rear wheel and spun me around in a full circle. I was holding on with all my power. When the red pickup finally stopped, it had also struck another vehicle. We sat in the middle of the street with traffic coming in all directions at rush hour traffic in the morning. I had a pounding headache from the impact. I stayed in my vehicle until the emergency response came to pick me up. I was truly traumatized.

The rescue team was about to put me on a stretcher. The person that struck me cried out in chest pain; they immediately left me and placed her on the stretcher. They placed her and me in the same vehicle and took us to the hospital. I was genuinely

thanking God for sparing my life. It could have all been over in a few seconds. I was seen at the hospital and sent home with a prescription for ibuprofen. My head keeps pounding. I came back to the hospital the next day and was diagnosed with occipital neuralgia and a concussion. I had to be set up to see a neurologist to deal with my head pain and suffering. I had to ask for God's help in leading me through this traumatic experience. Proverbs 3: 5, 6, "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart and lean not on your understanding in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he would direct thy path." God directed me is time for you to step back and readjust in life. I was physically, emotionally, psychologically needing a significant overhaul in life. I set up doctor appointments and went to several doctors at a time. I kept my job informed of how I was progressing for job security. I made sure my FMLA papers were up to date. I also had to set up a time with an attorney; the person who struck my vehicle only had liability insurance. Six months of my time was dealing with a psychologist to help me deal with my post-traumatic stress syndrome. My hospital insurance helped to pay my medical bills. During this time, out of work lead to other health issues. I had to have two stents placed in my heart. I went through cardiac rehab for several months to make sure everything was okay with the heart. After all this treatment, I was ready to return to work in October 2013. I was broken and rebuilt all over. The chaplains were glad to see their colleague return.

In 2014 this was another year of growth in dealing with death and dying. My mother-in-law was in Rotan, Honduras. She was doing well. Her oldest daughter was her caretaker. My wife is an RN, left to assist her sister in her mother's care. In was in late March that she took her journey to Rotan, Honduras. I kept her mother and family in much prayer. I remember my mother-in-law tells me that she feels like something is not

right internally with her. I told her to go and be checked. She commented she feels like something has died inside of me. This was shared with me when she lived with me. With all the love and care given to by the oldest daughter and youngest daughter, my mother-in-law passed on July 23, 2014. Her family was very heartbroken. I was very heartbroken. I knew now that God has her in His hands. I flew over for the funeral and gave the family love and support.

In 2014 November, I had a set back with one of my stents. One of them was blocked again; I was at work. When I felt myself not being able to function well, I drove myself to the doctor's office, and they told me that I was in the process of having a heart attack. They rushed me to the hospital and got me prepared to have my stent ballooned that evening. That is another blessing I was thankful for. God keeps on giving me many opportunities for spared life.

In 2015 I had a new challenge in dealing with my mother being diagnosed with stage four liver disease. We, as a family, had to decide what the best way to treat her cancer was. What are her wishes? She wanted to try chemotherapy. My mother tried the chemo treatment for two years. Things changed for towards the end of December of 2017. My mother developed diagnoses called chemo brain and delirium. It was very challenging for the family to care for her. We decided that we would have her cancer doctor and other healthcare professionals to determine the best care plan for her. As a family, we decided that we would like her to stop the chemo treatment and come home with hospice. We have a huge family, and we are providing the best care for her. It was challenging for me to take on this DMin Study, knowing that she has significant health

issues. Knowing my mother, she would like for me to continue to move forward in my studies. I spend Saturday spending quality time with my mother.

In 2015 for four months, I was the interim pastor at Smithfield 1st Seventh-day-Adventist Church in Smithfield, North Carolina, and I provided leadership for this church consistently. The church was mixed with the Caribbean and African Americans. I provided spiritual direction until the new pastor's arrival, coming from Andrews's Seminary. This church was seventy-five miles from my home.

Shortly afterward, in 2016, I was asked to pastor a church in Murfreesboro, North Carolina. This congregation was mostly African Americans. They had about 75 members in attendance. They have a strong praise and worship team. I enjoyed spending quality time with church and fellowship with this congregation. I stayed in this church until the new pastor came. He came in from Atlanta. The church has a big heart and is willing to be a shepherd. I must decrease as the recent shepherd increase. I was thankful to provide the leadership for this congregation. They did not want me to leave.

I returned to the Smithfield congregation, where my wife feels comfortable with the Caribbean's worship and fellowship. I am satisfied to fellowship in any community that's willing to be a shepherd by good leadership. I will continue to be faithful to God, leading as I transition from being a hospital chaplain to pastoring full time. I prefer not to do both. It is very challenging to provide quality pastoral care.

In 2017 I received a call from my brother in Florida, sharing that he is sick and has colon cancer. It was shocking news to me. I was in shock for several months and was dealing with denial. This cannot be. I was expecting him to take leadership in the family since my father's death. It seems that the administration is falling on me. I want him to

experience God's healing hand. There is a lot of pain and suffering in our family. My brother is taking chemotherapy like my mother was. He told me he has some good days and some bad days he will not complain. I try to keep in contact with him daily. We are very close, and I pray he gets the best of care.

This makes me focus more on preventive health. In 1975 I had a radical change when I became a vegetarian over forty years ago. This came about when I became a Seventh-day Adventist. It has helped me have better health and advocate for others who want to improve their lifestyle. It helps me out not just physical health, but emotional, psychological, and spiritual health. It is not just about the quantity in dealing with health but the quality of health. In John 3:2, "God said, he wishes above all things that we would prosper and be in good health even as I soul prosper." As I focus on retirement, I look at some of the things I hope to give back to the community. As a spiritual leader in the community, people look up to me. I am approaching the tender age of 62 in June of 2018. I plan to reach back to the city to empower young men and women to aim and purpose in life. Stop settling for the status quo. Set your aims and goals high across the board. You need to plan your work and work your plan to be the best in your class at every level of education. There are many distractions out there, but stay focus on your dreams.

I have four grandsons: Mosai, Christian, Micah, and Makai. Charity starts at home and spread abroad. I must start with them first. Hopefully, God will continue to help me not only be their grand-parent but to become their friend and mentor. I want to give them a spiritual foundation in life where they do not make some of the same mistakes I did.

Secondly, I would like to teach at the university some of the knowledge and skills I have acquired in the past decades. I want to take it from oral history to written history in

high technology. I want to challenge them to be like the three Hebrew young men in the palace. To be ten times better than the king's musicians and men.

Finally, after they have grasped the concept of developing a spiritual foundation, they are to reach back and empower someone else. The goal and aim are to help others know who the ultimate source of their strength, and that is God. Despite updating each time, the previous versions of my spiritual journey, they all consisted of the same spiritual complaint: my lack of relationship with God. It will be different this time as I transfer to the Mount of Olives Seventh-day Adventist Church in Laurinburg, NC.

This section will inform about Mount of Olives Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is necessary to draft lucid and concise histology of the emergence of the Mount of Olives Seventh-day Adventist Church enterprise to show the synergy inter-intra the expansive needs of the Mount of Olives Seventh-day Adventist Church systems leadership and the extreme, often excessive duress and distress of the workload on the leadership staff in the Mount of Olives Seventh-day Adventist Church system. We want to look at the following issues in this section.

Historical Descriptions: The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a mainstream Protestant church with approximately 19 million members worldwide, including more than one million North American members. The Seventh-day Adventist Church seeks to enhance the quality of life for people everywhere and to let people know that Jesus is coming again soon. Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as the only source of our beliefs. We consider our movement to be the result of the Protestant Conviction Sola Scriptura—the Bible as the only standard of faith and practice for Christians.

Currently, Adventists hold twenty-eight fundamental beliefs that can be organized into six categories: God, man, salvation, the church, the Christian life, and last day events. In each teaching, God is the architect, restoring a relationship with humanity that will last for eternity in wisdom, grace, and infinite love.

The South Atlantic Conference of SDA: On December 4, 1945, at 10:00 a.m., the General Conference and Southern Union Conference met at the Berean SDA Church on Ashby Street to organize a black conference. Elder A. F. Hackman, president of the Southern Union Conference, presided over 398 delegates and nineteen delegates-at-large. The representatives came from the Colored (Black) Departments of Carolina, Florida, and Georgia Cumberland Conferences. As the first step in organizing the new colored conference, it was Voted that the former colored departments of the Carolina, Florida, and Georgia Cumberland Conferences, together with delegates at large, constitute the conference organizers' delegates. The total of delegates present from churches was found to be 398 with the nineteen representatives at large. It was voted that the new conference's name would become the *South Atlantic Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*.

Elder H. D. Singleton became the first President of the South Atlantic Conference. From January 1, 1946, to 2011, we have had seven (7) presidents. They were: H. D. Singleton, J. H. Wagner, Sr., W. S. Banfield, R. L. Woodfork, R. B. Hairston, R. P. Peay, V. J. Mendinghall, and on September 11, 2011, at the twenty fourth Constituency Session, Elder W. L. Winston became the eighth president of the great South Atlantic Conference. The Lord has blessed and is blessing this conference. We have 42,139 members in three

states with ninety-eight pastors (full and part-time). We have nineteen schools with eighthly five full and part-time teachers.

The Laurinburg, NC SDA church inception and significant events. Mr. Hazel Bradham, a young man filled with the spirit of was determined to plant a congregation to cultivate, nourish, and see the results of God's vineyard. Accompanied by his wife, Susie, and two friends. John Kelly and Hattie Height. Together they planted seeds of the Gospel truth through the printed pages and benevolent deeds of compassion. Though blind and partially deaf, Mr. Bradham was led by boys and girls from house to house to sell relevant Christian literature to the community. Moreover, on many other occasions, he utilized his gift of signing to sing for the city the precious themes of salvation and grace to his audiences.

Elder Williams pastored the church for two years and was succeeded by Pastor N.B. Smith. Pastor Smith pastored the church for one year and was followed by Pastor Osterman. Pastor Osterman pastored the church very well. The following pastors succeeded pastor Ostermann: J. M. Phipps, R. E. Tottress, R. Franklin, J.L. R. Franklin, J.L. Follette, C. Thomas II, and O.J. McKinney Jr, B. Black, M. Preston, and Pastor P.J. Jones. Elder Preston made many improvements to the building and added man new members to the congregation. The following list of names constitutes the succession of pastors to the current date of this document (2018): Marcellus Howard, Nathaniel Good, Reginald Horton (2000-2002), Rodney Valentine (2003-2008), Jason Scott (2008-2013), Victor Bartley (2014-2018).

Laurinburg is a city in and the county seat of Scotland County, North Carolina, United States. Located in southern North Carolina near the South Carolina border, Laurinburg is

southwest of Fayetteville and is home to St. Andrews University. The Laurinburg Institute, a historically African-American school, is also located in Laurinburg. The population at the 2010 Census was 15,962 people. Settlers arrived at the present townsite around 1785. The settlement was named for a prominent family, the McLaurin's.

In 1840, Laurinburg had a saloon, a store, and a few shacks. Laurinburg High School, a private school, was established in 1852. The settlement prospered in the years following. A line of the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad was built through Laurinburg in the 1850s, with the first train reaching Laurinburg in 1861. The railroad's shops were moved to Laurinburg in 1865, hoping they would be safer from the Union Army attack. However, in March of that year, Union forces reached Laurinburg and burned the railroad depot and temporary shops.

Laurinburg was incorporated in 1877, and the first courthouse in Scotland County was erected in Laurinburg in 1901. A new courthouse was built in 1964. In 1904, a black preparatory school called the Laurinburg Institute was founded, and Main Street in Laurinburg was paved in 1914. As of the census of 2000, there were 15,874 people, 6,136 households, and 4,221 families residing in the city. The population density was 1,280.2 people per square mile (494.3/km). There were 6,603 housing units at an average density of 532.5 per square mile (205.6/km²). The city's racial makeup was 50.54% White, 43.06% African American, 4.23% Native American, 0.76% Asian, 0.03% Pacific Islander, 0.35% from other races, and 1.04% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 1.06% of the population.

There were 6,136 households out of which 32.1% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 41.8% were married couples living together, 23.2% had a female

householder with no husband present, and 31.2% were non-families. 27.9% of all households were made up of individuals, and 11.0% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.46, and the average family size was 3.

In the city, the population was spread out with 26.6% under the age of 18, 10.7% from 18 to 24, 25.9% from 25 to 44, 22.7% from 45 to 64, and 14.1% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 36 years. For every 100 females, there were 81.2 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 74.7 males.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The psalm's genre has been variously identified—Allen names three main contestants. Hymnic features mark individual thanksgiving. This seems to be the majority position, represented by Anderson (though they use different terminology).

(1) Individual hymn.

(2) Congregational¹

These disagreements are understandable, as the psalm shows traits from both the individual song of thanksgiving and the hymn. It also combines elements of the individual and the communal, as we have seen: Each of the three stanzas has its distinct perspective; individual, collective, and universal. The call to bless the Lord in Psalm 103:1b–2 functions as a summons to praise. The plural imperative of בָּרַךְ *piel* sometimes appears as the introit of a hymn. In the psalm opening, the imperatives of בָּרַךְ are in the singular, but they return in the plural in Psalm 103:20–22. While some commentators, e.g., Dahood², argue for an early dating of Psalm 103, most scholars contend for a post-

¹ C. L. Allen, *Psalms 101–150*, World Biblical Commentary 21, ed. Bruce Metzger (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002), 27–36.

² M. S. Dahood, *Psalms III:101–150* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 24.

exilic dating, e.g., Kraus and Allen. The arguments for a late date are compelling: the Aramaisms found in the language (e.g., The unusual $\text{--}\text{כִּי}$ suffix of 103:3–5, and זָכֹר of 103:14⁵¹), as well as the affiliation with the vocabulary and theology of Deutero-Isaiah point to a late dating. As we will see in chapter 4, the psalmist alludes³ to Exodus 34:6–7 in its present literary context. It is thus safe to assume, at least, that Psalm 103 is later than Ex 34. With the majority of scholars, I presume a post-exilic dating for this psalm.

The first – and most important point to underline in an OT theology of health, sickness, and healing – is that God himself created the first human beings: Adam and Eve (Gen 1-2). Therefore, as the human body designer, God thoroughly understands its workings, as David pointed out: For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are beautiful; I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body (Ps 139:13-16). A second fundamental concept from the OT is that sickness and death were among the Fall’s lasting results when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3).

Sickness and death were not part of the “magnificent” creation God fashioned (Gen. 1:31). Nevertheless, these adverse effects were, indeed, what he said would happen as a consequence of human disobedience. Pains from labor—whether from working in the fields or from bearing children—became a reality when the first couple did what God had forbidden. In an NT comment on the Fall and its aftermath, Paul explained that “just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, . . . in this way death came

³ Dahood, *Psalms III:101–150*, 24.

to all men because all sinned [Death reigned from the time of Adam] (Rom 5:14). In the third place, and related to the issue of the Fall, the Old Testament writers were aware that sickness (even to the point of death) could be a disciplinary measure on the part of God toward an erring member of his family. In the Song of Moses, God proclaims himself to be the only all-powerful God: “I put to death, and I bring to life, I have wounded, and I will heal” (Deut 32:39). The “wounding” may be part of God’s discipline,” but the healing also comes from the same Almighty God, as further evidence of the caring relationship he maintains with his creation.⁴

Very often, the prospect of God’s discipline is expressed in conditional statements. From the beginning of Israel’s journey with Yahweh toward the Promised Land, God emphasized that he was interested in their obedience to him through Moses. Moreover, He would be able to protect them if they would but trust him and follow his instructions: “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you” (Ex 15:26). This same idea of sickness as a discipline is reiterated in the conditional commands given to Moses at Sinai (Ex 23:25).⁵

Fourthly, and as already intimated in the previous point, the OT highlights God’s sovereignty and His ability to heal. No sickness, not even death, is beyond his capability

⁴ Richard Mayhue, *Divine Healing Today* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1983), 144. This notes some of the OT saints whose illnesses were not cured by God: Isaac (Gen 27:1); Jacob (Gen 32:25; 48:1); Ahijah (1 Kings 14:4); and Elisha (2 Kings 13:14). To that list, we can add some NT personalities as well: Paul (2 Cor 12:7-10); Trophimus (2 Tim 3:20); and (1 Tim 5:23). 1983: 144-150.

⁵ D.W. Amundsen and G.B Ferngren, *Medicine and Religion: Early Christianity through the Middle Ages*, ed. M.E.Marty (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982), 93-131.

to overcome. God called himself “the LORD who heals you” (Ex 15:26). Moses took Yahweh at his word and called upon him to heal his sister Miriam of her leprosy, which God did (Num 12:13). David, the psalmist, described God as the one who “heals all your diseases” (Ps 103:3). The prophet Elisha prayed to the Lord, and the Shunammite’s son was raised from the dead (2 Kings 4:32-35). According to the OT evidence, God can and does heal; but it should be noted that death still “reigned” (in the apostle Paul’s terms), for God did not always choose to heal.⁶

One of the concepts this psalmist enlarges is the idea of healing to include dimensions other than the physical when he spoke of the Lord as the one who “heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds” (Ps 147:3). King Solomon, in his prayer of dedication for the temple, said that if “God’s people would turn to him in humility and repentance, then God would “hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chron 7:14), perhaps opening the possibility that “healing” here includes the ideas of ecological healing and political stability. Once again, the accent is on the right relationship to God as a precondition for candidacy for the universe’s sovereign Ruler's healing activity. God may not always grant healing, but being in the right relationship with him is the first step God asks of his people. In the prophets, healing was frequently linked with the social, political, and spiritual aspects of life. Hosea 14:4 promised spiritual blessings to the repentant: “I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them.” In the same book, God described his relationship with his people as that of healing them (Hos 1:1,3), which, in the context, is perhaps a reference to delivering them socially and politically from slavery in Egypt. In

⁶ Mayhue, *Divine Healing Today*, 144.

Jeremiah, we find the language of curing and restoring being used for the spiritual relationship that Israel (Jer 3:22) and Jeremiah himself (Jer 15:19) had with God.

“Healing” is needed to choose the right values in life, as Jeremiah seems to say in the context of chapter 17: Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord... However, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. Like a partridge that hatches eggs, it did not lay is the man who gains riches by unjust means. When his life is half gone, they will desert him, and in the end, he will prove to be a fool O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD, the spring of living water. Heal me, O!LORD, and I will be healed; save me, and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise (Jer 17:5, 7, 11, 13).⁷

The OT writers thus underlined the fact that God can indeed heal his people in every aspect of their life. A final point in this rapid survey of the OT deals with the Jewish anticipation of well-being in the Age to Come. At that time, the Messiah would come as a healer, and sickness would be a thing of the past for God’s people. This aspect is most clearly and frequently observed in Isaiah’s lengthy prophecy. In the context of the messianic age and restoration, God spoke of binding up his people’s bruises and healing the wounds that he had inflicted (Isa 30:26). In that time of eschatological redemption, physical healing would characterize the Messiah’s activities: Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy (Isa 35:5).

⁷ Kuemmerlin J. McLean, “Demons: Old Testament,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* vol. 2, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 138-140.

The Suffering Servant of Yahweh prepared the way, bearing the punishment that was due to others: Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. Nevertheless, he was pierced for our transgressions, and he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds, we are healed (Isa 53:4). At that final glorious time, the year of the Lord's favor, there would be a joy instead of the sadness surrounding those who suffer. God himself would act through his Servant: The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor.... (Isa 61:1). This favor would include the physical well-being of God's people, according to Isaiah's description of life in the new Jerusalem in the Age to Come: Never again in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an older man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed (Isa. 65: 20). In the Age to Come, the ransomed of the Lord expect to enjoy all that he has prepared for them. Indeed, even the curse of Eden will be reversed: "Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivers a son" (Isa 6:7). Health and healing were anticipated as part of the eschatological blessings God's people would one day receive.

Here, then, is a brief overview of the OT material which the NT writers had in their theological background as they considered what to say about God's work in the New Covenant. Obviously, they would be inspired by God to write what he intended to communicate. However, the following points are the essential elements that were already

in the thinking of everyone associated with Judaism and its Scriptures. God is the Creator of the human body. Sickness and death are results of the Fall. Illness can be a disciplinary measure imposed by God. O The sovereign Lord can heal in all aspects of life. The Age to Come, ushered in by Messiah, would be a time of healing and reversing the curse of Eden.

Overview of Psalm 103:1-3

Psalm 103:3 He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. 103:3a heads the section of participles by claiming the Lord is *הַסֵּלֵךְ לְכָל־עֲוֹנוֹתַי*, “[the one] who forgives all your iniquity.” The verse paints a comprehensive view of God’s forgiveness, claiming God forgives “all your iniquities” (*כָּל־עֲוֹנוֹתַי*). In this context, the term *עָוֹן* probably comprehends the totality of all transgressions. Psalm 103:3 describes God with a definite participle of the verb *סָלַח*, the initial term for forgiveness in the Hebrew Bible.⁸ This term is not used to indicate forgiveness among humans — the one who grants *סָלַח* is always the Lord.⁹ According to Mays, it appears “much less often than appropriate for the significance of the message of forgiveness in the OT.” This concept of forgiveness and healing may be illustrated because one can only find four instances of the root *סָלַח* in the Psalms, including Ps 103:3.59. The verb is found in Psalm 25:11, the adjective of habit *סָלִיחַ*, “ready to forgive,” is found in Ps 86:5, and the abstract substantive, *סְלִיחָה*,

⁸ John S. Kselman, “Forgiveness,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 2, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 2:831-833.

⁹ James L. Mays, *The Lord Reigns: A Theological Handbook to the Psalms* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1994), 330-350.

“forgiveness,” is located in Ps 130:4. All three of these psalms can be categorized as laments (though Psalm 130 is sometimes classified as a special thanksgiving).

OT beliefs regarding health and healing Although this study primarily covers recovery in Psalm 103:3 and 3John 1:2. In 103:3b, the Lord is described as *תְּרַפָּא לְכָל־תַּחֲלָאֵי־כִי*, “[the one] who heals all your diseases.” God is thus described with a definite participle of *רָפָא*, “to heal.”¹⁰ The concepts of forgiveness in 103:3a and healing in 103:3b are meant to influence each other mutually and reciprocally, as they stand in explicit parallelism. The so-called hymnic participles of 103:3-5 are also typical of hymns. However, the same verses simultaneously point toward a memorable thanksgiving. They describe the Lord’s “acts of rescue on behalf of the petitioner in distress” This term is not used to indicate forgiveness among humans—the one who grants *סָלַח* is always the Lord.¹¹ According to Mays, it appears “much less often than appropriate for the significance of the message of forgiveness in the OT.”¹² This concept of healing and forgiveness may be illustrated by the fact that one can only find four instances of the root *סָלַח* in the Psalms, including Ps 103:3. The verb is found in Ps 25:11, the adjective of habit *סָלֵחַ*, “ready to forgive,” is found in Ps 86:5, and the abstract substantive, *סְלִיחָה*, “forgiveness,” is located in Ps 130:4. All three of these psalms can be categorized as laments (though Ps 130 is sometimes classified as an individual thanksgiving psalm).

¹⁰ F.L. Hossfeld and E. Zinger, *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101-150: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Hermeneia, 2011), 34.

¹¹ Mark, Stamm, *Let Every Soul Be Jesus’ Guest: A Theology of the Open Table* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006), 2:798-800.

¹² Stamm, *Let Every Soul Be Jesus’ Guest*, 2:798-800.

According to Brueggemann, Psalms 86:5; 103:3; and 130:4¹³ focus on forgiveness as a characteristic feature of the Lord. In Psalm 86:5, the poet reminds the Lord that he is good and ready to forgive (טוֹב וְ סָלַח). The verbal adjective implies that being prepared to forgive is a divine attribute, not only a mode of action.¹⁴ In Psalm 130, the psalmist recognizes that if God kept a full record of humanity's sins, no one would stand (130:3). However, he "derives comfort from the known character of Yahweh as a God who forgives (cf. Ps 86:15): this divine quality transcends human sinfulness."¹⁵ Psalm 130:4 insists that "But with you is forgiveness (כָּךְ יִעֲמָךְ הַסְּלִיחָה), so that you may be feared." We saw above that forgiveness and healing are linked in Psalm 103:3 among the passages presenting forgiveness as a characteristic feature of the Lord. While Psalm 103:3–5 may be read as a thanksgiving for a specific event, the section simultaneously transcends those particular circumstances. Participles dominate the area. Participles share something of the nature of adjectives and represent actions as durative in aspect.¹⁶ The individual thanksgiving of 103:3–5 is also blended with the community's experience in the second stanza, where willingness to forgive is presented as an essential characteristic of the Lord.

¹³ Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1984), 149-158.

¹⁴ Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, 128-133.

¹⁵ Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101 – 150*, in *Word Biblical Commentary 2* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press, 1982), 256.

¹⁶ Allen, *Psalms 101 – 150*, 256, 257.

Forgiveness and Healing (103:3B)

In Psalm 103:3b, the Lord is described as **הַרְפָּא לְכָל־תַּחֲלָאֵיכִי**, “[the one] who heals all your diseases.” God is thus described with a definite participle of **רפא**, “to heal.”¹⁷ The concepts of forgiveness in Psalm 103:3a and healing in Psalm 103:3b are meant to influence each other, as they stand in exact parallelism.¹⁸ This parallel illustrates the close relationship between forgiveness and healing in the language of the Psalter. A pertinent example of this phenomenon is Psalm 41:5b: “heal me (**הַרְפָּאֵה נַפְשִׁי**), for I have sinned against you.”¹⁹ Stamm includes **רפא** in his list of “roughly synonymous expressions” to **סלח** since it “often refers to a comprehensive restoration of the person that includes guilt (e.g., Isa 57:18; Jer 3:22; Hos 7:1; Psa 41:5; 107:20; 147:3; Isa 53:5 [...]).” Other psalms also exhibit a relationship between forgiveness and healing.

In Psalm 107, a hymn, section 107:17–22 recounts how some of “them” (the redeemed of the Lord from 107:2) were saved from their distress and healed by the Lord (107:19–20). Forgiveness is not mentioned, but the healing and saving work of the Lord implies that they had been forgiven because their “sinful ways” and their iniquities are listed as the cause of their affliction (Ps 107:17).²⁰

In Psalm 38, a lament, the psalmist’s manifold bodily afflictions can be traced back to God’s anger for the psalmist’s sin. “There is no soundness in my flesh because of your indignation; there is no welfare in my bones because of my sin” (Ps 38:4). The

¹⁷ Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101-150*, 101-150.

¹⁸ Hossfeld and Zenger, Underlined by the identical grammatical construction: A definite participle + **לְכָל** + an indefinite plural noun with 2.f.sg. Suffix.

¹⁹ Peter Craigie and Marvin Tate, *Psalms 1–50*, World Biblical Commentary, vol. 19, 2nd ed (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004), 92-98, 319.

²⁰ Allen, *Psalms 101 – 150*, 27-49.

psalmist asks for neither forgiveness nor healing in this psalm, but he does confess his iniquity and sin (38:19). The psalm ends on a prayer that the Lord must not abandon the psalmist and that he must make haste to help him (Ps 38:22–23). It is safe to assume that the help will include healing from the ailments caused by sin. At the start of the psalm, the psalmist also pleads for a reprieve from God’s reprove and discipline, compelled by God’s wrath (Ps 38:2). The prayer of Psalm 38:2 is very similar to Psalm 6:2.⁷⁰ In Psalm 6, the cry is followed by a cry for healing (הַיְיָ יִרְפֵּא) in Psalm 6:3b. However, in Psalm 6, the psalmist does not explicitly ask for forgiveness or confess to sinning, making it a more ambiguous case.²¹

After this brief review of the connection between forgiveness and healing in the language of the Psalter, we now return to Psalm 103.²² We have seen that the relationship between forgiveness and healing is not unique to our Psalm, though these concepts seldom stand in such an exact parallel as they do in Psalm 103. We also take with us the insight from Psalm 32 that the sickness experienced by the Psalm may be a poetic metaphor for suffering due to sin. The psalmist’s praise of the Lord in psalm103:3–5 may be elicited by the healing of actual sickness experienced as a series of life-renewing gifts. However, the praise for healing may also be a metaphorical expression of the joy of being forgiven.

In Psalm 103:3, we saw the interaction between forgiveness and healing. In Psalm103:3, we know the concept of recovery is extended into “redemption from death,”

²¹ Craigie and Tate, *Psalms 1–50*, World Biblical Commentary, 92-98.

²² It is also important to note that while these psalms list sickness and sin as reasons for lamenting, all their problems cannot be subsumed under this heading. Several of these psalms also list trouble caused by enemies: Ps 6:8–9, 11; 38:13, 20–21; 41:6–10.

as God is described as *הַגּוֹצֵל לְמָוֶת חַת חַיִּי יְיָ*, “[the one] who redeems your life from the Pit.” In the language of the Psalter, to be sick was to be already within the sphere of death. “[W]hat for us would be a weak form of life (illness, various kinds of distress) could be spoken of by the Israelites as a form of death.”²³ This close relationship between sickness and death is evident in some of the previous section’s psalms. In Psalm 6, the psalmist cries for healing (Ps 6:3). In 6:6, he entices and appeals to God to help him: He reminds God that none remembers him in death and asks rhetorically, “who praises you in Sheol?” The enemies of the psalmist in Psalm. Forty-one seem to assume that the psalmist will (or should) promptly die (Ps 41:6, 9). In Psalm 107:18, “they” came to the gates of death before they called out to the Lord. When he healed them, he saved them from destruction (Ps 107:20). God’s deep commitment to his covenant people was expressed with this term of healing and forgiveness.

While the commitment between God and his people could withstand breach, it was not a one-sided commitment. The theological use of *חֶסֶד* lacks the element of rigid mutuality that can be seen in secular use of the term. Still, the people of God were expected to respond to him in obedience and devotion. We can see this in our psalm in Psalm 103:11, 17–18. In psalm 103:11, God’s *חֶסֶד* is for “those who fear him,” i.e., those who belong to the community that worships the Lord. In Psalm 103:17–18, clearer demands are placed upon this group, as “those who fear him” stand in parallel with “those who keep his covenant.”²⁴

²³ John Day, *Psalms Old Testament Guides* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 20-45.

²⁴ R. L. Routledge, “Ḥesed as Obligation: A Re-Examination,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1), (1995): 179-196.

The healing of Psalm 103:3b is cogently meant to stand in parallel with the forgiveness motif of Psalm 103:3a. These concepts are thus consciously tied together by the poet. The healing in Psalm 103:3b is also closely connected to redemption from death in 103:4a. Thus, the forgiveness motif interacts also with deliverance from death by extension. The life-giving gifts of Psalm 103:4b–5 further flows from the saving from death in 103:4a.

We can here see several diverse concepts being woven together into an interconnected whole. Therefore, this section can be read as a tapestry of the wellness caused by the Lord's "benefits." Though the threads by no means are the same, they can no longer be easily separated, comprising together a coherent whole.

The forgiveness motif's placement at the head of this list renders it foundational for the rest of the benefits list. Mays support this claim: The list of the Lord's dealing in verses 3–5 comprises one process. They all stand under the rubric 'forgive' in the first clause and flow from that. In sequence, they outline the course of forgiveness that heals, redeems life from threatening death, so adorning life with steadfast love and mercy and making it possible to experience life as good—with the result that life is renewed.²⁵

These concepts, therefore, are included in the associational cluster of the forgiveness motif in Psalm 103 and are vital for understanding how forgiveness is presented in Psalm 103. The psalmist experiences forgiveness as a healing and life-renewing experience. The Old Testament, Stamm claims, "does not know of forgiveness in the modern sense of a spiritual phenomenon; rather, it knows it only as a concrete,

²⁵ Mays, *Psalms 103*, mercy joined to loving kindness, 27-32.

comprehensive process that also affects the individual or society externally.”²⁶ Here we see the concrete, tangible effects of forgiveness, as Psalmist Psalm 103 experiences them. As commentators phrased it: “forgiveness expresses itself in a concrete event of change toward a positive future.”²⁷ However, we keep in mind the caution from Psalm 32: these substantial effects may also be poetic metaphor expressions.

We saw a series of life-renewing and—affirming gifts: healing, redemption from death, crowning with steadfast love and compassion, satisfaction with good, and renewal of life. We saw how these gifts are all interconnected, all flowing from the forgiveness at the head of the list. We thus concluded that all these concepts partake in the associational cluster of forgiveness in Psalm 103.

Overview of 3 John 1:1-3

3 John 1 The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. 2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects, you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers. (NASB95). In verse 1, the author of 3 John identifies himself as “the elder” and identifies this epistle’s recipient as “Gaius.” Also, the writer communicates to Gaius that he loves him employing the truth. In verse 2, the author tells Gaius that he prays for him that he may prosper and be in good health as his soul prospers. Verse 3 presents the reason why John prays for Gaius, namely that he heard from other Christians that he was walking utilizing truth. 3 John 1 The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth (NASB95).

²⁶ Stamm, *Let Every Soul Be Jesus’ Guest*, 279.

²⁷ Mays, *The Lord Reigns*, 6. Here he asserts everything is subsumed under a single heading, and a “vision of reality” is presupposed for every psalm. the same view of reality, it becomes difficult to explore whether individual psalms present a unique viewpoint.

“The elder” is the articular nominative masculine singular substantive form of the adjective *presbuteros*, which is the comparative form of *presbus*, “an old man” and denotes “an older man.” The word has a positive connotation attached to it because it possesses the idea of respect and honor. The *presbuteros*, “elders” in the ancient world, were respected for their wisdom and insight; thus, they were deserving of honor and respect. The plural form of *presbuteros* referred to a committee or group of older men who controlled the community’s business, economic, and social affairs.

Presbuteros appears 118 times in the Septuagint, where it can mean “old” (Gen 8:11, 12; Zec 8:4). The comparative force of the word occurs in Genesis 19:31, 34, 27:1, and 15. The plural form is used by Israel’s elders, who were the foundation of their social order and political structure (Ex 17:5; 18:12; 19:7; Num 11:16; Josh 7: 6; Joel 1:14). These individuals were responsible for making legal decisions concerning criminals and were responsible for making judgments for the community.²⁸

In 3 John 1, *presbuteros* signifies John’s apostolic and pastoral authority in the church. The use of this word also indicates that the readers were familiar with John. His apostolic authority was already acknowledged and accepted by his readers; — thus, he does not mention that he is an apostle. “The beloved” is the articular dative masculine singular form of the adjective. *Agapetos*. Classical and LXX Usage of *Agapetos* is a verbal adjective from *agapao*. In classical Greek, it commonly describes “that with which one must be content,” and often refers to only children. It is used as if a child to whom all the love of his parents is given. When used of things, the word means “desirable,” and when used of persons, it means “beloved.” It is employed in letters as a term of address.

²⁸ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* no 49 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software, 1999), 10-40.

There are 15 canonical texts that the word is used in the Septuagint and six others. The Septuagint conforms to the classical usage, but in another sense, it prepares for the theologically significant use of the term in the New Testament. *Agapetos* is used seven times for the Hebrew word *yachidh*, “only.” It is employed five times for the Hebrew term *you*, “beloved.” The word is coupled with *monogenes* in Judges 11:34, meaning “only, unique.” It is found in Amos 8:10 and Jeremiah 6:26.

1 John 3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him (NASB).

In 3 John 1, the adjective *Agapetos*, “beloved” serves as a reminder to Gaius that he is the beneficiary and object of the Father’s love, the Son’s and the Spirit’s. The divine love of God the Father expressed itself in eternity past when He designed the Incarnation Plan for the Son to execute to provide salvation for all humanity (Jn 3:16-18; Eph 1:3-14). The divine love of God the Son expressed itself in eternity past when He volunteered His services to execute the Incarnation Plan of God the Father (Heb 10:5-9). The Lord Jesus’s divine-love expressed itself when He voluntarily denied Himself the independent function of His divine attributes. He refused himself to die a spiritual and physical death on the cross as a substitute for all humankind (Phil 2:5-11). The divine love of the Holy Spirit expressed itself when He made the gospel understandable at the point of salvation (2 Cor 6:1-2).

This love expressed itself when the Spirit performed seven ministries for the believer at the moment of salvation and after salvation through His various post-salvation functions to reproduce the character of Christ in the believer.

The divine love of the Trinity expressed itself in providing for the believer three categories of grace provision: (1) “Antecedent” grace: Election, Predestination, and Eternal inheritance (2) “Living” grace: The spiritual life of the believer. (3) “Eschatological” grace: Resurrection body and rewards for faithfulness.²⁹

3 John 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper and be in good health in all respects, just as your soul prospers (NASB). This verse is composed of the following: First, it is a vocative masculine singular form of the adjective *Agapetos*, “beloved.” Second, preposition *peri*, “in...respects.” Third, it is a genitive neuter plural form of the adjective *pas*, “all,” and is the first person singular present middle indicative form of the verb *euchomai*, “I pray.” Fifth, it is second person genitive singular form of the personal pronoun *su*, “you” and is a present passive infinitive form of the verb *euodoomai* (μαι), “that may prosper.” The conjunction *kai* “and” present active infinitive form of the verb *hugiaino*, “be in good health.” The adverb *kathos*, “just as” is a third-person singular current passive indicative form of the verb—*euodoomai*, “prosper” is a genitive second person particular form of the personal pronoun *su*, “your.” The articular nominative feminine singular form of the *psuche* is the word “soul, and is emphatic about underscoring the Love of God.”³⁰

In classical Greek, the verb demonstrates a wide range of meanings. It most often means, “To offer prayer, pray that,” and with this, the meaning “vow.” Sometimes it can mean “to boast, profess loudly.” In the Septuagint, the verb often means “to make a vow”

²⁹ Johannes P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on semantic domains, Vol. I*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), 320.

³⁰ William Arndt, F. W. Danker and W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1098.

(Deut 12:11) and can also mean “to pray” (Jb 42:10; Jer 7:16), and only once does the word mean “to wish” (Jer 22:27).

The verb *euodoomai* means “to prosper” in the temporal realm in contrast to the spiritual realm, denoted by the phrase “just as your soul prospers.” This verb refers to Gaius’s material and financial well-being compared to the spiritual realm referring to prospering materially and financially. It relates to Gaius’ temporal needs and not lusts being met.

The present tense of the verb is a customary or stative present referring to a constant state. Thus, this tense refers to the government or condition of prospering in the temporal realm. The verb's passive voice means that the subject receives the verb’s action by either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here God’s agency to perform the healing is unexpressed but is emphatically an apposition or referent to God as that agent of healing. Thus, the passive indicates that John prays that Gaius would receive the action of being prospered in the temporal realm by God. The infinitive form of this verb *euodoomai* is an infinitive of purpose. This means that it is indicating the purpose of the action of its controlling verb. It is answering the question as to “why” John prayed for Gaius.³¹

The meaning of *Peri Panton* in this text is fascinating. The neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* is functioning as a substantive. This adjective means “all things.” It refers to God’s various temporal blessings, such as food, shelter, and clothing, which are essential to support human life in the first century A.D. to execute the Father’s plan for

³¹ Robert W. Yarbrough, *1-3 John*, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: MI: Academic, A Division of Baker Publishing, 2008), 367.

one's life. This word is the object of the preposition *peri*, which is a marker of reference indicating that John is telling Gaius that he makes it a habit of praying for him to be prospered "with regards to all things" such as food, shelter, clothing, and transportation. This prepositional phrase is in the strong position of this statement, emphasizing the full scope of John's prosperity for Gaius.

The conjunction *kai* is adjunctive, meaning that it introduces a word that presents an "additional" item that John prayed to the Father on behalf of Gaius. John made it his habit of praying that Gaius would be prospered with regards to all things "as well as" or "and also" his physical health. This conjunction is joining the two infinitives *euodoomai* and *hugiaino* together. This conjunction is indicating that the function of these two infinitives is the same.

The verb *hugiaino* in classical Greek means "to be physically or mentally healthy or sound." This idea of soundness extended to other areas as well, where it was used of strength in political or religious matters. It was used in the closing of letters and meant "goodbye." The word occurs 24 times in the Septuagint, where it virtually occurs in some form of greeting. It appears 12 times in the New Testament.

Louw and Nida list two meanings: (1) the state of being healthy, well (in contrast with sickness) to be well, to be healthy. Moreover, to be correct in one's views, with the implication of such a state being positively valued to be right, to be sound, to be accurate.³²

In 3 John 2, the verb *hugiaino* means "to be healthy" or "to be of sound health," referring to sound physical health. The present tense of the verb is a customary or stative

³² *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), 1, 39.

present referring to a constant state. Thus, this tense refers to the government or condition of being in good health. The active voice of the verb is stative, expressing the same thing as the present tense. The infinitive form of this verb *hugiaino* is an infinitive of purpose, meaning that it indicates the purpose of its controlling verb's action. It is answering the question as to "why" John prayed for Gaius.

The comparative conjunction *kathos*, which is used with the indicative mood of the verb *euodoomai*. It alludes to "prosper" to form a relative clause that compares Gaius prospering regarding temporal things. Moreover, as well as being in good health and his soul prospers. He was growing spiritually. Once again, the verb *euodoomai* means "to prosper," but this time in the spiritual realm contrasts with the temporal realm. This verb refers to the spiritual well-being of Gaius in contrast to the temporal domain. It refers to the fact that Gaius is growing spiritually and reflecting the character of Christ as a result of making it his habit of experiencing fellowship with God. This restoration and healing are accomplished by obeying the Father's will, which the Spirit reveals to the believer through God's Word. The present tense of the verb is a customary or stative present referring to a constant state. Thus, this tense refers to the government or condition of prospering in the spiritual realm. The verb's passive voice means that the subject receives the verb's action by either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the agency is unexpressed but is a reference to God. Thus, the passive indicates that John is acknowledging that Gaius was prospering spiritually as a result of the Spirit reproducing the character of Christ in his life.

The Holy Spirit acted upon Gaius when he lived his life utilizing truth due to obeying the Lord's command. Particularly, to love his fellow Christian as Christ loves

him. John's statements in verses 3-6 indicate this. John informs Gaius that he heard from other itinerant teachers of the gospel that he demonstrated the love of God to them by showing them hospitality and providing for them financially and materially. This indicated that Gaius was walking in truth and living according to the Lord's command to love one another. The indicative mood is declaratively presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or complete statement. The indicative mood is the employed verb *euodoomai*, "prosper." This mood is employed to form a comparative clause that expresses a comparison between Gaius prospering regarding temporal things and being in good health and his soul thriving, i.e., growing spiritually.³³

In 3 John 2, the noun *psuche* means "soul," referring to Gaius's immaterial, invisible human attributes and which features would include volition, self-consciousness, conscience, mentality, and emotion. This noun's articular construction is employed with the personal pronoun *su*, "your," to denote possession. The personal pronoun (*su*) refers to Gaius and functions as a "genitive of possession" and "possessive" pronoun, indicating that this soul "belongs to" Gaius.³⁴

Translation of 3 John 2 3 John 2 Beloved, I myself make it a habit of praying that you would be prospered with regards to all things as well as that you would be in good health just as your soul prospers.

³³ Arndt, Danker and Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1099.

³⁴ Timothy Friberg and F. N. Miller, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, Vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 414.

Exposition of 3 John 2

Here in verse 2, John addresses Gaius again with the adjective *agapetos*, which the close personal relationship that existed between Gaius and those Christians. They testified to the apostle John that Gaius was walking in the truth. He is demonstrating God's love to itinerant pastor-teachers and evangelists. It does not necessarily refer to John's relationship with Gaius. As we noted in 3, John received secondhand information regarding Gaius walking in truth and demonstrating God's love to itinerant teachers and evangelists in the church.

This adjective *agapetos* also speaks of Gaius' relationship to the Trinity. It designates Gaius as a Christian since it expresses that he was the recipient and beneficiary of God's love. The adjective *agapetos* serves as a reminder to Gaius that he is the beneficiary and object of the Father's love, the Son's, and the Spirit's. It would serve to remind Gaius that he was the beneficiary of God's divine-love before conversion and is now the object of His personal love after transformation.

Then, the apostle John shares with Gaius what he requested from the Father in prayer on his behalf. He informs Gaius that he made it his habit of praying that he would be prospered with regards to all things as well as that he would be in good health just as his soul prospers. "All things" would refer to the essentials which sustain human life such as food, shelter, and clothing.

This soul prosperity was related to Gaius' spiritual health and was, in fact, spiritual wealth, which resulted from him growing up spiritually. It was the result of the Holy Spirit reproducing the Lord Jesus Christ's character in His life due to Gaius obeying the Father's will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word

of God. His spiritual growth is the direct result of making it his habit of experiencing fellowship with God, which is also accomplished by obeying the Father's will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word of God.³⁵

In our day and age, the god of materialism rules, especially in America. In fact, for many, the American Dream is merely acquiring as many possessions as possible and accumulating as much wealth as possible. For many, security and self-esteem are based upon controls and how much money one has in their bank account. Unfortunately, this attitude, which is promoted by Satan's cosmic system, has infected the church.

The verb *euodoomai* means "to prosper" in the temporal realm in contrast to the spiritual realm, denoted by the phrase "just as your soul prospers." This verb refers to Gaius's material and financial well-being compared to the spiritual realm, referring to prospering materially and financially. It relates to Gaius' temporal needs and not lusts being met.

The present tense of the verb is a customary or stative present referring to a constant state. Thus, this tense refers to the government or condition of prospering in the temporal realm. The verb's passive voice means that the subject receives the verb's action by either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the agency is unexpressed but is God. Thus, the passive indicates that John prays that Gaius would receive the action of being prospered in the temporal realm by God. The infinitive form of this verb *euodoomai* is an infinitive of purpose, meaning that it indicates the purpose of its controlling verb's action. It is answering the question as to "why" John prayed for Gaius.

³⁵ Yarbrough, *1-3 John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 367.

The verb *hugiaino* in classical Greek means “to be physically or mentally healthy or sound.” This idea of soundness extended to other areas as well, where it was used for resilience in political or religious matters. It was used in the closing of letters and meant “goodbye.” The word occurs 24 times in the Septuagint, where it virtually occurs in some form of greeting. It appears 12 times in the New Testament.

The phrase rendered “above all things” — *περὶ πάντων* *peri pantōn*- would be more correctly rendered here “concerning, or in respect to all things;” and the idea is that John wished earnestly that “in all respects” he might have the same kind of prosperity which his soul had. The standard translation “above all things” would mean that John valued health and outward prosperity more than he did anything else; he wished that more than his usefulness or salvation. This cannot be the meaning and is not demanded by the proper interpretation of the original. The sense is, “In every respect, I wish that it may go as well with you as it does with your soul; that in your worldly prosperity, your comfort, and your bodily health, you may be as prosperous as you are in your religion.” This concept of holistic prosperity is the reverse of the wish which we are commonly constrained to express for our friends; for such is usually the comparative want of prosperity and advancement in their spiritual interests, that it is an expression of benevolence to desire that they might prosper in that respect as much as they do in others.

That thou mayest prosper—*εὐοδοῦσθαι* *euodousthai*. This word occurs in the New Testament only in the following places: Romans 1:10, rendered “have a prosperous journey;” 1 Corinthians 16: 2, rendered “hath prospered;” and in the passage before us. It means, appropriately, “to lead in a good way; to prosper one’s journey;” and then to make prosperous; to give success to; to be prospered. It would apply here to any plan or

purpose entertained. It would include success in business, happiness in domestic relations, or prosperity in any of the engagements and transactions a Christian might lawfully engage. It shows that it is right to wish that our friends may succeed in their hands and their life plans.

Furthermore, be in health, to enjoy bodily health. To a correct interpretation of this, it is not necessary to suppose that Gaius was suffering from bodily indisposition, though perhaps it is most natural to assume that, as John makes the wish for his health, so prominent. Nevertheless, in all circumstances, it is expected to wish for our friends' health and prosperity, and it is as proper as it is expected if we do not give that a degree of prominence above the welfare of the soul. John had learned, it would seem, from the “brethren” who had come to him, 3 John 1:3, that Gaius was living as became a Christian; that he was advancing in the knowledge of the truth, and was exemplary in the duties of the Christian life; and he prays that in all other respects he might be prospered as much as he was in that. It is not very common that a man is more grown in his spiritual interests than he is in his other parts, or that we can, in our wishes for the welfare of our friends, make the prosperity of the soul, and the practice and enjoyment of religion, the standard of our wishes regarding other things. It argues a high state of righteousness when we can express our strongest desire for our friends' welfare and express the hope that they may be in all respects as much prospered as they are in their spiritual concerns.

Conclusions and Summary

Psalm 103 is one of the most beloved texts in the Bible. It is easy to see why: The psalm is an eloquent tribute to the Lord and his compassionate care for his subjects. The

poet's artistic skill can be detected in the many alliterations, repetitions, wordplay. He also employs powerful imagery, describing the vastness of the Lord's רַחֲמֵי, forgiveness, and compassion, as well as the transient nature of humankind.

In Psalm 103:3, forgiveness, and healing stand in an exact parallel and are thus closely related. These concepts are also associated with other Hebrew Bible texts. It may also indicate that forgiveness is not seen as merely a spiritual concept. Being forgiven is seen as a comprehensive process that is expected to bring tangible, beneficial change. However, the section may also describe the salvation experience of the individual in a poetic metaphor. The redemption from death and life-renewing gifts that the psalmist enjoys may be metaphorical expressions for his delight in forgiving.

The application of the Scriptures should be upon careful exegetical procedures, which, wherever possible, consist of properly balanced analytical, historical/cultural, literary, and theological data.” This method also exegetes’ certain words and concepts and highlights. It accentuates certain social, cultural, historical, aesthetic, ideological, and theological information of texts and how these factors may influence the liturgical meaning of the text’s content and context.³⁶ The essence of 3 John 1:3 integrates and propagates many of the same concepts. They are embedded in Psalm 103:2. Both the Old and the New Testaments alludes, echoes, and amplifies the motif of holistic healing. The healing that emanates from a relationship with God, and this relationship is within the locus of God’s Love and compassion to His people. Healing and prosperity operate seemingly as synonyms. The end telos is the regeneration and restoration of the believer

³⁶ V. K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-rhetorical Interpretation* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 192.

to be an effective conduit of God's love and serve as active disciples to refract His love and mercy to the community.

The believer who appropriates by faith his union and identification with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and session will experience fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It will prosper spiritually since all the believer's spiritual blessings, and eternal inheritance resides in his union and identification with Christ. Paul prayed that the Colossian believers would attain all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in experiential knowledge of God's mystery, which is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. An "experiential knowledge" of the Lord Jesus Christ means personally encountering Him through the process of experiential sanctification as He is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the pages of Scripture and prayer and being affected by this encounter with the Lord resulting in the gaining of practical spiritual wisdom and more of the character of Christ (Col 2:1-3).

Temporal wealth can be lost and lost through physical death, but the spiritual wealth that is the believer is through his union and identification with Christ is eternal. Circumstances change, but the believer union and identification with Christ is lasting. Therefore, the believer should pursue the wealth that is eternal rather than what is temporal. Real wealth and prosperity, and joy are experienced by the believer who appropriates by faith his union and identification with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and session, which constitutes sharing fellowship with God. Real prosperity and life do not consist of possessions or money. Real wealth and life experience fellowship with God, becoming like Christ, enduring undeserved suffering or adversity to develop Christ-like character.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist Church grew out of the efforts of Baptist preacher William Miller. He was a former military man who, in the 1830s, was instrumental in an evangelical wave known as the “great second advent awakening.” According to Miller’s reading of biblical prophecy, Jesus would return sometime during 1843 or 1844. His followers soon pinned down the Second Coming to October 22, 1844, a date which ultimately became known as the “Great Disappointment” when Jesus failed to appear. The movement quickly dwindled to just a handful of followers, among them a 17-year-old girl named Ellen Harmon, who helped reinvigorate the Adventists. This process happened when she experienced a vision of its people traveling to the city of God. She married an Adventist preacher named James White, and the couple became instrumental in the church’s growth. As Ellen G. White, she also became an author, publishing her first book in 1851. In 1860, several Adventist congregations assumed the name Seventh-day Adventist and formally organized a church in 1863. During that same year, White had another vision; this vision emphasized the connection between physical health and spirituality and the importance of proper diet, exercise, and natural remedies. Health, which had never been an Adventist concern, now became a focal point.

At the behest of White, in 1866, the church established the Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek, Michigan, to care for the sick as well as disseminate health and instruction. At first, it was little more than an eight-room clinic. He renamed it the Battle Creek Sanitarium in 1877 when it was under the direction of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. It would become as famous as some of its wealthy clientele, including J.C. Penney, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Amelia Earhart, William Jennings Bryan, Dale Carnegie, and John D. Rockefeller. Kellogg had moved to Battle Creek at four and was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist family. White and her husband recognized that Kellogg held great potential and groomed him early to take over the institute. They helped finance his education at New York's Bellevue Medical College, from which he graduated in 1875. Kellogg then became medical superintendent of the Institute and quickly put his stamp on the operation, changing its emphasis from hydrotherapy to medical and surgical treatment. He also coined the word "sanitarium" and formulated what he called the "Battle Creek Idea," emphasizing a good diet, exercise, proper rest, good posture, and fresh air value. Kellogg was not paid for his work at the Sanitarium, earning his income from some fifty books he authored in his lifetime.

He also made money from the manufacture of breakfast cereal, following discovering a way to make crispy wheat and corn flakes. Acting as his right-hand man in building the sanitarium and the cereal business for more than twenty years was his disgruntled brother, Will Keith Kellogg. He patiently bought up shares of the institute's cornflake business until he gained control. He then broke from his brother and, in the early 1900s, applied Kellogg's name to the cereal, creating one of the world's most recognizable trademarks as well as a successful international company. While the

Kellogg Company prospered throughout the twentieth century, the Battle Creek Sanitarium reached its high-water mark in the 1920s. After the stock market crash of 1929, many of the sanitarium's clientele could no longer afford their annual pilgrimage, and the fortunes of the institution began to fade. In 1942, the main building was sold to the federal government, and a year later, at the age of ninety-one, John Kellogg died.

The popularity of the Battle Creek Sanitarium in the 1800s led to the foundation of other Adventist sanitariums around the country, which numbered twenty-seven by the century's turn. Over the next fifty years, the sanitariums evolved into hospitals, forming the Adventists' medical network's backbone. The church's medical headquarters also moved from Battle Creek to Loma Linda, California, another sanitarium founded by Ellen White. In the 1960s, ownership of the hospitals was transferred to local Adventist organizations known as conferences. In 1972, the church decided to centralize its healthcare institutions' management on a regional basis, forming Adventist Health Systems. Conferences ceded control to the system, creating several entities at the union (multi-state) level, based on how the church was organized. In the North Pacific Union of the Adventist Church, Northwest Medical Foundation was established, and in the Pacific Union region, Adventist Health Services was created. The Western divisions merged in 1980 to create Adventist Health System/West (which in 1995 shortened its name to Adventist Health). Formerly the headquarters for Adventist Health was located in Los Angeles, close to some of its largest institutions. Wary that small facilities might be neglected, management moved its operations in 1982 to more centrally located Roseville, California, a city where Adventist Health had no healthcare presence. In 1985, a headquarters was built in Roseville to provide financial management for system hospitals.

Moreover, to perform other administrative functions in 1982, the regional operations formed a national organization, Adventist Health System/U.S. The new terminology, which management called the largest not-for-profit, the United States' multi-institutional healthcare system. The purpose of the consolidation was to achieve economies of scale, but it soon became apparent that AHS/US also brought the church's ascending liability. The bankruptcy of any division in AHS/US, or a lawsuit, held the potential of putting all of the church's assets at risk. Legal counsel for the church convinced its leadership that ascending liability made it imperative that the consolidated healthcare organization be dissolved. A system reorganization was completed in 1991, and regional divisions began operating on their own.

In 1990, Adventist Health was sued by the Arizona conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church connected with a long-term dispute over Tempe Community Hospital. The suit alleged that Adventist Health had been hired to manage the facility but improperly took control, sold the hospital, and kept all the proceeds. Moreover, Adventist Health was accused of charging the conference \$15,000 per month for management fees for more than seven years after the Tempe Community's sale. When the matter was finally resolved in 1994, the courts ruled in favor of Adventist Health. This litigation and other lawsuits with AHS divisions indicated an ongoing rift between the church and the healthcare institutions it had founded. Increasingly, AHS entities began to operate like any other hospital organizations, although maintaining an affiliation with the church. However, more outspoken Adventist church members expressed a sense of betrayal, asserting that the church's medical work had been intended as an instrument for

spreading the church's beliefs. According to these dissidents, AHS operations were now in business simply to stay in place and lavishly reward the executives who ran them.

Whether or not the criticism was valid, Adventist Health took steps to grow its operations in the manner of a secular enterprise. In 1988, it acquired Ukiah General Hospital, in California's Mendocino County, for \$5.9 million. Already operating Ukiah Adventist Hospital and another facility in nearby Willits, Adventist Health came under scrutiny by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which was concerned that the organization had violated antitrust laws governing non-profit companies because it now controlled seventeen percent of the Ukiah healthcare market. The matter took five years to resolve, and in the end, the FTC decided that there was insufficient evidence that the acquisition of the Ukiah General had harmed area consumers. This conclusion had national ramifications, opening the door for more hospital mergers and acquisitions. With the advent of managed care, which significantly reduced inpatient revenues, many smaller-market hospitals, by necessity, sought out partners like Adventist Health.

Strategies for Prosperity in the Mid-1990s and Beyond

In the mid-1990s, Adventist Health ran 18 hospitals with 2,800 beds, eighteen home health agencies, four hospices, and eight home care services, in addition to various clinics, outpatient facilities, and medical foundations. Eleven of its hospitals were located in California, with another four in Oregon and single facilities in Washington, Utah, and Hawaii. Adventist Health was older and more stable than most healthcare operations in the West, but it was also forced to contend with the rise of managed healthcare organizations that paid fixed rates for care. In 1994, Adventist Health established a

managed care contracting enterprise, Pacific Integrated Healthcare, to help member Southern California institutions negotiate better rates in a prepaid healthcare environment. Adventist Health also took part in a similar initiative for Fresno-based Community Hospitals of Central California, called Center California Health Partners, which was linked to the California Health Network, consisting of eighty-one hospitals and fifty physicians' organizations. While other area healthcare organizations were losing money, in 1994, Adventist Health reported net revenues of \$916 million and net income of \$90.2 million. Results fell off somewhat over the next two years, but the organization remained relatively healthy. Nonetheless, it was forced to close its Utah facility, Monument Valley Hospital, in 1996.

In the mid-1990s, Adventist Health focused on strengthening its position in California's Central Valley region. A long-term effort to acquire the 156-bed Delano Regional Medical Center was dropped in 1997, but the organization was successful elsewhere. In April of that year, it assumed management of the fifty-seven-bed Selma District Hospital in Fresno County and immediately began working with the board of directors to acquire the thirty-five-year-old institution. The deal was not completed until two years later, following approval from area voters in a special election held in June 1999. In the end, Adventist Health agreed to assume the hospital's outstanding liabilities of \$4 million in addition to a 1984 \$4.2 million bond taken out for expansion. Adventist Health further solidified its presence in the Central Valley area with the acquisition of Clearlake's thirty-two-bed Redbud Community Hospital and forty-nine-bed Central Valley General Hospital, located in the town of Hanford. In the era of managed care, these facilities were forced to find a more significant partner to survive and continue

providing healthcare in their rural communities directly. While often serving as a savior of such institutions, Adventist Health was not immune to financial pressures. In 1998, it was forced to institute some cost-cutting measures, including the closure of two skilled nursing units and cutbacks in its home care program. It was also forced to cancel some HMO contracts and renegotiate others. Adventist Health posted a net income of \$20.5 million in 1998, the result of \$25 million in investment income so that the organization suffered a \$4.5 million operating loss for the year.

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The Core Constituent Principles of SDA Health Reform

“And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible” (1 Cor 9:25). Many professed Christians do not know that it is a religious duty to preserve and promote physical health. They seem to say, do not worry about your body; just try to save your soul. So, they never ask what is right and what is bad for one’s health. Smoking, drinking, pork-eating is all right with them. We would never go along with such health-destroying habits. Not only do we reject the things just mentioned, but also the use of every other article that is harmful. These include flesh foods in general (even clean animals), coffee, tea, Coca-Cola and other soft drinks, vinegar, and drugs.

Someone may challenge us, “I will give you \$1,000.00 if you show me where the Bible forbids drinking coffee.” A convinced health reformer would probably reply, “And I will give you \$2,000.00 if you show me where it is written, Thou shalt not smoke. “The Bible does not offer a direct answer to every and any health question. However, it teaches general health principles that permit or even demand specific applications in harmony with our scientific knowledge. Additionally, the Bible illuminates our experience, our common sense, and our goodwill. For example: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31).” Know you not that ye are

the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defiles the temple of God, he shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Cor 3:16, 17).

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes 5:23). As can be seen, health reform is part of our preparation for the second coming of Christ. Friday evening, June 5, 1863, in the house of A. Hilliard at Otsego, Michigan, United States, Ellen White received the vision on “the great subject of Health Reform.” On that day, Ellen and James White had traveled to Otsego, about thirty miles from Battle Creek, to support the evangelistic meetings conducted by R. J. Lawrence and M. E. Cornell. They stopped with the Hilliard family, where, at sunset time, several believers gathered to welcome the Sabbath. Ellen White was asked to offer the opening Sabbath prayer, during which she received a forty-five-minute vision. Was God’s choice to communicate at such a specific time, the commencement of the Sabbath, intentional? Or was it just a coincidence? A closer examination of the historical data unfolds an exciting story.

The Heart of the Otsego Vision

The next day, Sabbath, June 6, 1863, she penned the following reflection: “I was shown some things regarding my husband and myself.”¹ First, it appears, the impact of the vision evoked in her mind an inclusively holistic view of the Sabbath experience.² In

¹ Ellen White, *Manuscript 1* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing, 1863), 1-20.

² White, *Manuscript 1*, 3.

the message written to the church at Monterey on the same date (June 6), she referred to the Sabbath day's blessings that rested upon them on that Friday. "Last evening, while engaged in family prayer at Brother Hilliard's, the blessing of the Lord rested upon us, and I was taken in vision."³ This experience took her thoughts away from the frantic activities, heartaches, frustrations, and disappointments. This vision also guided her attention to what God cares about. Much later, she expressed the significance of the Sabbath as a day "designed to bring men into communion with God" and a time where "The hours provide a time for spiritual and relational healing."⁴ Second, the council on health began with a practical lesson based on God's case study. James and Ellen White visited Otsego to support the evangelistic tent meetings conducted by R. J. Lawrence and M. E. Cornell, scheduled to commence on June 6. While James struggled with depression resulting from overwork, they continued to focus on the activity and expansion of God's work at the cost of personal health. In this context, God provided a case study demonstrating what matters to Him most. Ellen White wrote, "I saw that now we should take special care of the health God has given us, for our work was not yet done" and that "Satan was preserving in his efforts to destroy our usefulness."⁵

Is it possible to assume that overactivity contributes to a lack of usefulness and tiredness impacts the health of interpersonal relationships? "I saw that we neither understood the depth and keenness of the heart trials of the other. Each heart was peculiarly sensitive; therefore, each should be especially careful not to cause each other

³ White, *Manuscript 1*, 1, 2.

⁴ White, *Manuscript 1*, 1, 2-3.

⁵ White, *Manuscript 1*, 1, 2-5.

one shade of sadness or trial.”⁶ God’s message to James White was direct and pointed. The stresses involved with the setting up of the church organization contributed to his unhealthy mindset. He dwelt too much on the past injustice, and his mind “seemed chained to these unpleasant memories.”⁷ A well-balanced lifestyle contributed to stress, worry, negative predisposition, discouragement, and even unchristian attitudes such as an unforgiving spirit. “I saw an angel standing by the side of my husband pointing him upward, saying, ‘For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.’ Jesus forgives errors and mistakes and grievous sins.”⁸

This vision’s timing drew attention to the essential elements necessary for human well-being, namely time and relationships. Sabbath, a time-out with God, provided a space for personal and healing, a time for celebration and renewal of spiritual vitality.⁹ God rested on this day from all His creative activity to celebrate a relational togetherness with His creation.

Success in accomplishing God’s purpose for life (Gen 1:28) depended on good health, a balanced lifestyle, and a happy predisposition flowing from both spiritual and physical nourishment. No wonder Ellen White was advised to “take time to devote to our health that we may in a degree, recover from the effects of overdoing and overtaxing the

⁶ White, *Manuscript 1*, 1, 2-8.

⁷ White, *Manuscript 1*, 1-10.

⁸ White, *Manuscript 1*, 1-20.

⁹ Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Association, 1898), 286-288.

mind.”¹⁰ The context of the Otsego vision experience drew attention to the value of spiritual nourishment flowing from a relational, life-changing experience with God.

Even though the vision came crucial, directing the church’s attention to the first health laws. Ellen White did not describe its content until August 1864, followed by a series of six pamphlets entitled “Health or How to Live” in 1865. Schwarz suggests that a “variety of reasons prevented Mrs. White from publishing any extensive material.”¹¹ Through December 1863, Ellen and James White traveled throughout New England. During this period, the family experienced the loss of their son Henry.

Further, James White wrote in November, “Her time when not in meet-ing or traveling, since we left Michigan in August, has been wholly occupied with local and personal testimonies.”¹² Does it mean that during this time, she remained silent on this vital subject? A careful examination of manu-scripts and letters shows her ongoing concern for the believers’ spiritual well-being, matters associated with the heart’s attitude.

Further, in the context of frantic activities con-nected with the church’s progressive growth, she admonished the ministers that they were overtaxing their energies by not giving the mind time to rest. She pointed out, “The mind affects the body.”¹³ In November 1863, she referred to the importance of “plain and wholesome food.” Finally, in the fourth volume of *Spiritual Gifts*, published in August 1864, she included a full overview of the vision received in June 1863. This vision commenced

¹⁰ White, *The Desire of Ages*, 286-289.

¹¹ White, *The Desire of Ages*, 286-289.

¹² James White, “Eastern Tour,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (November 1863): 204.

¹³ White, *Eastern Tour*, 1-3.

regarding God's provisions in the Garden of Eden, the reasons that led humanity into intemperance, the relationship between diet and disease, and the simple methods in combating poor health. The overall principle was straightforward: "To preserve health, temperance in all things is necessary. Temperance in labor, temperance in eating and drinking."¹⁴

Schwarz observes, "As soon as Mrs. White began to speak and write extensively on healthful living, many persons commented on the similarity of her teachings to those of early reformers." Soon after writing down the health principles revealed to her in the Otsego vision, Ellen and James White visited Dr. Jackson's "Our Home on the Hillside" clinic to observe his practices.

Further, they invited Dr. Trall to present a series of health presentations at Battle Creek, Michigan. More interesting is the inclusion of articles by the early reformers in the six publications "Health and How to live."¹⁵

In contrast, Arthur White argues that the health principles shown to Ellen White were "so different from the concepts commonly held at that time." One may ask, in what way was the counsel similar and, at the same time, different from the reformers of her time? On this point, Schwarz provides a fascinating insight:

Preoccupied with the Civil War and Reconstruction problems during the 1860s, Americans proved less responsive than previously to health reformers' admonition. At about the same time, significant advances in antiseptic, bacteriology, and pathology

¹⁴ White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4A (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press, 1864), 146.

¹⁵ Richard Schwarz, *John Harvey Kellogg: The Pioneering Health Reformer* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Heald, 2006), 20.

began to steal the reformers' thunder in health reform. Many of their followers now shifted their attention to the gymnastic and physical culture program of Dio Lewis. As old ideas and convictions faded into the background, the collection of reform principles developed during a quarter of a century seemed destined to disappear as a unique system. At the critical moment, Seventh-day Adventists added principles of healthful living to their religious tenets. Ellen White's focus on cleanliness, sunlight, fresh air, the value and use of water, vegetarianism, and the importance of positive attitudes resonated with the American reformers' voices. However, when the old health-reform principles seemed destined to disappear as a unique system, the vision given to Ellen White introduced a unique focus. Firstly, it drew attention to what matters to God most, namely, spiritual health. Secondly, it prompted awareness of a holistic approach to well-being. Whatever tends to injure the health and premature death is a form of slow suicide and must, therefore, be considered a violation of the sixth commandment, which says, "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex 20:13).

Holistic Approach to Well-being

The Otsego vision focused on the elements necessary for the progressive development of a healthy mind, body, and spirit. Ellen White wrote, between the mind and the body, there is a mysterious and beautiful relation. They react to each other. To keep the body healthy to develop its strength, every part of the living machinery may act harmoniously and be the first study of our life. For this purpose, the body required the best physical nourishment. Much later, she argued, "Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and

natural as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart strength, power of endurance, and vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet.”¹⁶ At the same time, the nourishment of the body required a balanced approach to diet. A return to the original diet did not apply one rule for all. Ellen White cautioned, “But not all foods wholesome in themselves are equally suited to our needs under all circumstances. Our diet should be suited to the season, to the climate in which we live, and to the occupation we follow.” Here, the selection of healthy and nutritious food should be guided by “sound judgment.”¹⁷

In the framework of sound judgment and common sense, she called for a balanced approach to reforms, suggesting, not all who profess to believe in dietetic reform are reformers. She maintained, “with many persons, and the reform consists merely in discarding certain unwholesome foods. They do not understand clearly the principles of health, and their tables, still loaded with harmful dainties, are far from being an example of Christian temperance and moderation.”¹⁸ It seemed to her that a partial knowledge of the dietary principles lead to a rigid attitude, ill health, and an insensitive imposition of personal views on others.¹⁹ She called for a balanced view of temperance in work, eating, drinking, and primary care. Here she cautioned that health reform should not be understood as an end in itself. Instead, a healthy lifestyle provided the best condition for the highest service to God and man. The principles revealed in the Otsego vision moved

¹⁶ Ellen White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Pub Association, 1938), 373-416.

¹⁷ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 371-416.

¹⁸ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 371-416.

¹⁹ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 371-416.

beyond an emphasis on the cure of the body. It is noteworthy that the nineteenth-century reform movements in America awakened interest in various aspects of a healthy lifestyle. Other reformers promoted vegetarianism, sanitation, water treatments, fresh air, and other public health reforms. However, God's initiative to communicate at the commencement of the Sabbath, a time, as expressed by Ellen White, when "the blessings of the Lord rested upon us," took the Seventh-day Adventist emphasis on health to the heart of the matter, the realm for spiritual nourishment – a place for the healing of the heart, mind, and human attitudes.

Health Principles for Ancient Israel

The distinction between food articles as clean and unclean was not a merely ceremonial and arbitrary regulation but was based upon sanitary principles. The observance of this distinction may be traced to a high degree, the extraordinary vitality that has distinguished the Jewish people for thousands of years. The principles of temperance must be carried further than the mere use of spirituous liquors. The use of stimulating and indigestible food is often equally injurious to health, and in many cases, sow the seeds of drunkenness. True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful. Few realize as they should how much their diet habits have to do with their health, character, usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny. The appetite should ever be in subjection to the moral and intellectual powers. The body should be a servant to the mind and not the reason for the body.

Facts show that certain habits are wholesome, while others are unwholesome. Our observation, in line with our experience, confirms these facts. Science informs us all about these facts. Moreover, the Spirit of Prophecy draws our attention to these facts.

a) Things conducive to health:

- faith in God; obedience to God's laws; assurance of God's approval
- clear conscience
- cheerfulness
- correct habits in general
- obedience to physical laws governing the body
- proper diet
- physical exercise
- rest
- fresh air (living in rural areas)
- sunshine

b) Things detrimental to health:

- guilty conscience
- stress (anxiety, mental depression, unhappy married life)
- wrong eating habits (overeating, eating at improper times, unwholesome food, not drinking enough pure water)
- close confinement
- Polluted air (lack of ventilation) -lack of sunshine (sleeping in sunless room), lack of physical exercise
- lack of rest, lack of cleanliness

- improper clothing
- intoxication (smoking, drinking, drug medication.)

c) Some rules for eating and drinking:

“In grains, fruits, vegetables, and nuts are to be found all the food elements that we need.”²⁰ “Articles of diet that should not be touched: flesh foods,”²¹ “animal fats, coffee, tea, beer, wine, and alcoholic drinks in general.”²² “Rich desserts (rich cakes, pies, puddings) should be left alone. Especially harmful are the custards and puddings in which milk, eggs, and sugar are the chief ingredients.”²³ “Cheese, rich pastry, spiced foods, and condiments do their work in deranging the stomach, exciting the nerves, and enfeebling the intellect.”²⁴ Mustard, pepper, pickles, vinegar, and similar things irritate the stomach.²⁵ Baking soda causes inflammation of the stomach and is poisonous to the system.²⁶

“The excessive use of salt is harmful.”²⁷ “And so is the excessive use of sugar.”²⁸ Forbear from the “consumption of fried foods and the excessive use of fat and oil.”²⁹

²⁰ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 310.

²¹ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 373-416.

²² White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 393, 420- 421.

²³ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 331-335.

²⁴ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 236.

²⁵ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 345.

²⁶ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 316.

²⁷ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 311.

²⁸ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 327.

²⁹ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 354.

“Milk and sugar, eaten together in large quantities, are even more injurious than meat.”³⁰ “It is not well to eat fruit and vegetables at the same meal.”³¹ “Food should not be eaten very hot or very cold. If food is cold, the vital force of the stomach is drawn upon to warm it before digestion can take place.”³²

“Overeating debilitates the stomach and the other organs of digestion, bringing on, as a result, a feeling of oppression, indigestion (dyspepsia), colic, and headache. It benumbs the sensitive nerves of the brain and exercises a depressing influence upon the intellect.”³³ Many dig their graves with their teeth by indulging in overeating and failing to take sufficient physical exercise. “Such a course endangers the strongest constitution.”³⁴

Those who are bothered with a sense of “oneness” and a desire for frequent eating should restrict their appetite. The purpose of faintness, the all-gone feeling, “is generally the result of meat-eating, and eating frequently, and too much.”³⁵

“A two-meal-a-day program is recommended for better health.”³⁶ If a third meal is deemed necessary, it should be light and eaten several hours before bed.

³⁰ White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 330.

³¹ Ellen White, *Ministry of Healing* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1905), 299.

³² White, *Ministry of Healing*, 106.

³³ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 101-103.

³⁴ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 36.

³⁵ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 175.

³⁶ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 173-178.

Eat a substantial breakfast because, in the morning, your stomach is better prepared “to take care of more food than at the second or third meal of the day.”³⁷

Drinking at mealtime retards the digestive process. “Taken with meals, water diminishes the flow of the salivary glands, and the colder the water, the greater the injury to the stomach. Ice water or ice lemonade, drunk with meals, will arrest digestion until the system has imparted sufficient warmth to the stomach to enable it to take up its work again. Hot drinks are debilitating, and besides, those who indulge in their use become slaves to the habit. Food should not be washed down; no drink is needed with meals.”³⁸

“Digestion is hindered by violent exercise or deep study immediately after eating; nevertheless, a short walk after a meal is beneficial.”³⁹ Regularity in eating is essential. “The stomach calls for food at the time it is accustomed to receiving it. If dinner is eaten one or two hours before or after the usual time, the stomach is not prepared to take care of it properly.”⁴⁰

“The stomach needs rest. After a regular meal, at least five hours should elapse before the next meal is eaten. Nothing should be eaten between meals.”⁴¹ “A fruit diet for a few days has often brought great relief to brain workers. Many times, a short period of entire abstinence from food, followed by a simple, moderate eating, has led to recovery

³⁷ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 173.

³⁸ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 20.

³⁹ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 103-104.

⁴⁰ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 179.

⁴¹ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 173, 179, 229, 235-236.

through nature's own recuperative effort. An abstemious diet for a month or two would convince many sufferers that the path of self-denial is the path to health.”⁴²

We may not always see why, but certain things that might not even seem essential to us directly connect with the law of God. This principle of health is true about health reform and the correlation with the law of God. E. G. White says: Man has lightly regarded the law of Ten Commandments, but the Lord would not come to punish the transgressors of that law without first sending them a message of warning. The third angel proclaims that message. Had men been obedient to the Ten Commandments' law, carrying out in their lives the principles of those precepts, the curse of disease now flooding the world would not exist to a high degree?

“Men and women cannot violate natural law by indulging depraved appetite and lustful passions, and not violate the law of God. Therefore, He has permitted the light of health reform to shine upon us.”⁴³

The prophesied “reformatory movement” is to restore “the principles of the law of God” in the home. ⁴⁴ This restoration is possible if it includes everything that goes with it-also the principle of health reform. Therefore, if we are not real health reformers, we do not meet the description of God's remnant people (Rev 14:12). Because, as we just read, to ignore the rules of health reform is to transgress the law of God. This viewpoint is confirmed in the following appeal: “Will, our people, see and feel the sin of indulging

⁴² White, *Ministry of Healing*, 189.

⁴³ Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1875), 161.

⁴⁴ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 119.

perverted appetite? Will they discard tea, coffee, flesh meats, and all stimulating food, and devote the means expended for these hurtful indulgences to spreading the truth?”⁴⁵

We are either commandment keepers and health reformers or health deformers and commandment breakers. The importance of the health reform message can be seen from the following standpoints. Our Body, “the Temple of God” in the plan of salvation, the human being is to become a “temple” “for a habitation of God through the Spirit” (1 Cor 3:16; Eph 2:22). For the accomplishment of this aim, the whole being “spirit and soul and body”-must “be preserved blameless” (1 Thes 5:23). This practice and process is the only way in which we can reach “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:13).

“God’s purpose for His children is that they shall grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ. To do this, they must use every power of mind, soul, and body aright.”⁴⁶ “Between the mind and the body, there is a mysterious and beautiful relation. They react to each other.”⁴⁷ “That which corrupts the body tends to corrupt the soul.”⁴⁸

“The Spirit of God must daily control us, or Satan controls us.”⁴⁹ Health Reform, the Right Hand of the Third Angel’s Message. In the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, health reform is called “the right hand” of the third angel’s message. “A body without

⁴⁵ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, 569.

⁴⁶ Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1909), 153.

⁴⁷ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, 485.

⁴⁸ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 280.

⁴⁹ Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1889), 102.

hands is useless . . . Therefore, the body which treats the right hand indifferently, refusing its aid, can accomplish nothing.”⁵⁰

Health Reform and Salvation

We should not misinterpret Christ’s declaration that a disabled man, whose right hand has been cut off, can enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:30). He referred to our unsanctified will (our idols), which must be surrendered. He did not mean that we can be saved even if we disregard the principles of health reform.

“In the preparation of a people for the Lord’s second coming a great work is to be accomplished through the promulgation of health principles.”⁵¹

“The light God has given on health reform is for our salvation and the salvation of the world.”⁵² “He [God] designs that the great subject of health reform shall be agitated and the public mind deeply stirred to investigate; for it is impossible for men and women, with all their sinful, health-destroying, brain-enervating habits, to discern sacred truth, through which they are to be sanctified, refined, elevated, and made fit for the society of heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory.”⁵³

The message of health reform must gain much more ground in our midst, accomplishing its purpose before we can stand in the presence of God as a perfect people, prepared for the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. “The remnant people of God

⁵⁰ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, 102, 103.

⁵¹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 224.

⁵² White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 446.

⁵³ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, 162.

must be converted. The presentation of this message is to result in the conversion and sanctification of souls. We are to feel the power of the Spirit of God in this movement. This healing and love concept are a wonderful, definite message; it means everything to the receiver, and it is to be proclaimed with a loud cry. We must have a true, abiding faith that this message will go forth with increasing importance till the close of time.”⁵⁴

“As we near the close of time, we must rise higher and still higher upon the question of health reform and Christian temperance, presenting it in a more positive and decided manner. We must strive continually to educate the people, not only by our words but by our practice. Precept and practice combined have an important influence.”⁵⁵

The consequence of Neglecting the Light on Health Reform, “God gave the light on health reform, and those who reject it rejected God.”⁵⁶ To disregard light is to reject it.”⁵⁷ “If we enfeeble the body by self-gratification, by indulging the appetite, and by dressing following health-destroying fashions, to be in harmony with the world, we become enemies of God.”⁵⁸

It is postulated that there is real biblical Health Reform, and it is a line of demarcation between faith and obedience. “Our habits of eating and drinking show whether we are of the world or among the number whom the Lord by His mighty cleaver of truth has separated from the world. These are His peculiar people, zealous of good

⁵⁴ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, 154.

⁵⁵ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 112.

⁵⁶ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, 136.

⁵⁷ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, 680.

⁵⁸ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, 63.

works.”⁵⁹ The most concise, and at the same time, the comprehensive definition of health reform or Christian temperance that we have found in the writings of E. G. White. She states: “True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful.”⁶⁰

In 1909 Sister White wrote: “We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship.”⁶¹ “The time has not yet come to prescribe the strictest diet. However, we should not read this statement to mean: “Such a time will never come.” The servant of the Lord says: “Let the diet reform be progressive.”⁶² The ministers should have taken the first steps in this direction. Many things are beyond the organization’s control, but specific measures lie within the leadership's reach and responsibility, and this is where God holds us accountable.

Those “that sigh and that cry” are hugely disappointed when they see that even leaders are setting the wrong example. In this connection, Dr. O. S. Parrett, former medical secretary of the General Conference, wrote (August 13, 1953) to Elder W. H. Branson (then General Conference president), to the editors of the *Review and Herald*, and to the leading brethren: “In the following pages I shall review the history of our college and the factors which have brought us to our present crisis, since a good record is the most critical factor in diagnosis, thus pointing the way to a cure.

⁵⁹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 372.

⁶⁰ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 562.

⁶¹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, 159, 163.

⁶² White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, 135.

“Enclosed is an essential message, ‘Backsliding in Health Reform,’ which was sent to our leader in Washington in 1908.” This man to whom ‘Backsliding in Health Reform’ was given was called of God as a leader to our people. He had excellent organizing ability and was primarily responsible for our present worldwide structure. A man of strong character and extraordinary leadership force, he was called to deal with the Battle Creek disaffection at the turn of the century. Those who were in error were straight on our health principles but off on our doctrines. Unfortunately, in dealing with this trying situation, this man mainly threw overboard our health reform, and this lack of interest in and even opposition to our health message is today reflected throughout our ranks and, I believe, is at the bottom of the crisis which involves not only our medical school but our world-wide work as well. Its last analysis has to do with faith in the messages sent to us through Mrs. E. G. White.

Elder Haskell once told me that while the world would be tested on the Sabbath question, the test would come to our people on the Spirit of Prophecy. This attitude toward the hundreds of pages written on health reform has led to a situation where many of our ministers today eat meat, and many drinks their coffee.

Few will deny that our leaders’ attitude is having its effect upon our people's rank and file and upon the teachings and practices of our entire medical work and our institutions, to which we might hope to look for help in this crucial field.

Another leading worker was sent from headquarters in Washington to a western camp meeting where Faith preached Righteousness. He refused the lunch offered him by the sanitarium’s matron where he was staying, preferring to take his meals out. His wife explained that he must have meat to endure such wearing labor. He died later of cancer.

Evidently, this man did not know that Yale University some years ago experimented with one of our former sanitariums to determine the effects of meat-eating on endurance.

Fifteen track athletes, all meat-eaters from Yale, competed with thirty-two untrained flesh abstainers. The vegetarians showed perseverance more than double that of the meat-eaters. Repeating the experiment on other occasions always showed the same results.

A leading official of one of our large union conferences recently said that he was tired of being the butt of jokes about meat-eaters. At a recent meeting in the Middle West, a group of leading ministers went to dinner. This man chose a vegetable plate, as did his closest neighbor, while all the others chose meat. However, during the meal, these two men had to take a ribbing from the meat-eaters, simply because they had faith in the Spirit of Prophecy and showed their faith by their obedience.

Many brethren will never know this side of eternity the losses to their denomination in personnel and tremendous financial burdens added because we fail to believe the Lord concerning health reform.

Prescribing a Stricter Diet

“Again, and again I have been shown that God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design-which man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. Among those waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat-eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet.”⁶³

⁶³ Ellen White, *Council on Health* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1922), 450.

“Greater reforms should be seen among the people who claim to be looking for the soon appearing of Christ. Health reform is to do among our people a work which it has not yet done. Some ought to be awake to the danger of meat-eating, who are still eating the flesh of animals, thus endangering the physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat-eating will go from God’s people to walk no more with them.”⁶⁴ “No meat will be used by His people.”⁶⁵

If we leave it up to the individual to decide whether he wants to be a meat-eater or a vegetarian, there will never be a separation on this ground; those who are “only half converted” on this question will not have to leave the faithful remnant, and the condition predicted in these last three statements will never be fulfilled.

Harmful Practices

SDA’s know that they have to discard such harmful practices as smoking, drinking, using tea and coffee. However, our church members who have frequent contacts with the Adventist brethren know that the church is not strict in these lines. It is disheartening to hear complaints from good Adventists to the effect that those who continue to indulge in these habits are not always put under discipline. Even denominational magazines admit that not all members abstain from these things. Here are two examples:

⁶⁴ Ellen White, *Council of Diet* (Washington, D.C: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1923), 382.

⁶⁵ White, *Council of Diet*, 82.

Many in the SDA church believes it is time for us as Seventh-day Adventists to recognize that we, too, have a problem among us with alcohol. In too many Adventist homes, alcohol is being served, not only at parties but as a refreshment at the dinner table! Alcohol bars are in some Adventist homes. Nor should we think that only professional people are involved in the problem.

Some of our young people are growing up in this sophisticated atmosphere regarding alcohol. They are using alcohol and other drugs, thus getting into the same problems as other students despite their influence.

The Adventist Review put out a *Special Temperance Issue in 1982*, making the following admission: “Perhaps some readers will be shocked to learn that we consider the problem of social drinking in the Adventist Church to be large enough to confront explicitly and openly. We are sorry to shock anyone, but the simple truth is that Adventists do not live in a vacuum. They are surrounded by evil. They are confronted daily with TV advertisements that picture liquor as part of ‘the good life.’ Not surprisingly, some have been influenced by this propaganda. A college president reported recently: ‘Some [students] tell us that on occasion their parents use alcoholic beverages in the home.’ A pastor said: ‘I can testify that there is a need among our people. Youth at our academies are into drugs and liquor, and too often, parents indulge in alcoholic drinks in the privacy of their homes or socially.’ Some order wine regularly when they eat in

restaurants.” The use of alcoholic drinks (which include beer) “is a violation of God’s law.” “Tea and coffee drinking are a sin.”⁶⁶ Smoking is a “sinful indulgence.”⁶⁷

We believe that those who use these forbidden articles and those who deal with these things should be under church discipline.

Drug Medication

Through denominational publications, the members of the church have been advised not to use drugs. We believe this is not in harmony with the light that has been given to us. “However, drugging should be forever abandoned; for a while, it does not cure any sickness. It debilitates the system, making it more susceptible to disease”⁶⁸ “Drug medication, as it is generally practiced, is a curse. Educate away from drugs. Use them less and less and depend more upon hygienic agencies; then nature will respond to God’s physicians-pure air, pure water, proper exercise, a clear conscience.”⁶⁹

“There are many ways of practicing the healing art, but there is only one way that Heaven approves. God’s remedies are the simple agencies of nature that will not tax or debilitate the system through their powerful properties. Pure air and water, cleanliness, a proper diet, purity of life, and a firm trust in God are remedies for want of which thousands are dying.”⁷⁰ Christ declared that He came to recover men’s lives. This work is

⁶⁶ White, *Council of Diet*, 425.

⁶⁷ Ellen White, *Temperance* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1949), 61.

⁶⁸ White. *Council on Diet*, 83.

⁶⁹ White, *Temperance*, 85.

⁷⁰ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, 443.

to be done by Christ's followers, and it is to be done by the simplest means. Families are to be taught how to care for the sick. The hope of the gospel is to be revived in the hearts of men and women. We must seek to draw them to the Great Healer. In the healing work, let the physicians work intelligently, not with drugs, but by following rational methods. Then let them, by the prayer of faith, draw upon the power of God to stay the progress of the disease. This will inspire in the suffering one's belief in Christ and the power of prayer, and it will give them confidence in our simple methods of treating disease. Such work will be a means of directing minds to the truth and will be of excellent efficiency in the gospel ministry's work.

Let every means of holistic health be devised to bring about saving souls in our medical institutions. This is our work. If the spiritual work is left undone, there is no necessity of calling upon our people to build these institutions.⁷¹

Objectives of SDA Sanitariums

Christ is the one to be revealed in all the institutions connected with the closing work. However, none of them can do it so thoroughly as the health institution where the sick and suffering come for relief and deliverance from both physical and spiritual ailment. Like the person with paralysis of old, many of these needs the forgiveness of sin the first thing, and they need to learn how to 'go, and sin no more.'

Suppose our health sanitariums connected with this closing message fail to lift Christ and the gospel's principles developed in the third angel's message. In that case, it fails in its most important feature and contradicts the very object of its existence. For this

⁷¹ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, 191.

reason, the Lord has marked out a way in which His people are to carry forward a work of physical healing combined with the teaching of the word. Sanitariums are to be established, and with these institutions are to be connected workers who will carry forward genuine medical missionary work. Thus, a guarding influence is thrown around those who come to the sanitariums for treatment.

This is the provision the Lord has made whereby gospel medical missionary work is to be done for many souls. These institutions are to be established out of the cities, and in the educational work is to be intelligently carried forward. These institutions are the Lord's agencies for the revival of pure, elevated morality. We do not establish them as a speculative business but to help men and women to follow the right habits of living.

As to drugs being used in our institutions, it is contrary to the light which the Lord has been pleased to give. The drugging business has done more harm to our world and killed more than it has helped or cured. The light was first given to me why institutions should be established; that is, sanitariums were to reform physicians' medical practices. "It is the Lord's purpose that His method of healing without drugs shall be brought into prominence in every large city through our medical institutions."⁷²

Conclusion

God confronted the progressively growing church at the most crucial part of its journey – a need for a spiritual reorientation in preparation for its role in education (1872) and mission (1874). The Sabbath's emphasis reminded the church that its identity was not grounded in inactivity but God's call to a journey of pilgrimage. More so, the identity

⁷²White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, 189-191.

was not merely a nametag but a fullness of life that germinates out of a transformational faith experience with God. Referring to Christ-focused spiritual well-being's transformational nature, Ellen White wrote, Marvelous will be the transformation wrought in him who by faith opens the heart's door to the Savior. Such transformation enhances the use of common sense to follow the basic principles of life—the laws of health.

“Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ's first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred about holistic wellness. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, and their extravagance in dress and other things.”⁷³

Every duty that calls for reform involves repentance, faith, and obedience. It means the uplifting of the soul to a new and nobler life. Thus, every real reform has its place in the work of the third angel's message. Mostly does the temperance reform demand our attention and support?

“If the work of temperance were carried forward by us as it was begun thirty years ago, at our camp meetings and presented before the people the evils of intemperance in eating and drinking, and especially the evil of liquor drinking. If these things were presented in connection with the evidence of Christ's soon coming, there would be a shaking among the people.”⁷⁴ If church members do not act the part God has

⁷³ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, 62.

⁷⁴ White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, 110, 111.

assigned them, the movement of health reform will go on without them, and it will be seen that God has removed their candlestick out of its place.

Finally, a relational experience with God, built on trust, faith, and confidence in His presence, adds a sparkle of motivational and inspirational energy. “With the power and light that God imparts, you can comprehend more and accomplish more than you ever before deemed possible.”⁷⁵ Here, one finds the heart of the Seventh-day Adventist health message—a motivational and inspirational framework for God’s mission in the world.

There is a work to be done by our churches that few have any idea or concept of and care about. ‘I was a hungered,’ Christ says, ‘and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.’ We shall have to give of our means to support laborers in the harvest field, and we shall rejoice in the sheaves gathered into the Kingdom of God. However, while this is right, there is a work, as yet untouched, that must be done to save humanity from engineering its demise. The mission of Christ was to heal the sick, encourage the hopeless, bind up the brokenhearted. This work of restoration is to be carried on among the needy, suffering ones of humanity. God calls not only for your benevolence but your cheerful countenance, your hopeful words, the grasp of your hand. Relieve some of God’s afflicted ones. Some are sick, and hope has departed. Bring back the sunlight to them. Some souls have lost their courage, speak to them, pray for them. Some need the bread of life. Read to them from the Word of God.

⁷⁵ White, *Ministry of Healing*, 293-298.

There is a soul sickness no balm can reach; no medicine heals. Pray for these, and bring them to Jesus Christ. Moreover, in all your work, Christ will be present to make impressions upon human hearts. This Christ-centered work is the kind of medical missionary work to be done.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The SDA church's views on health reflect a theology that holds that all things must be interpreted finally regarding the Bible. Practically, one should have a sound body and mind to render the most effective service to God and others. One central Adventist belief is that men and women are made in God's image with the freedom and power to think and act. Though each is created a free being, every person is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and soul, dependent upon God for life and all else. According to Adventist theology, the care of the body-either personally, socially, or institutionally-is fully an expression of Christian commitment. Since Adventists believe that personal health is a God-given trust essential to one's preparation for the Second Advent, people have a responsibility to care for their bodies.

This responsibility includes attention to diet, as well as abstinence from alcohol and tobacco. The person who knowingly violates simple health principles, thereby bringing on ill health, disease, or disability, is living in violation of the laws of God.⁵ In many ways. Therefore, the Seventh-day Adventist patient is ideally receptive to holistic, preventive, and rehabilitative regimes. As a ministry, the church operates more than 650 health institutions throughout the world. The Bible reveals God's interest in health for the body, not just for the soul. More than any other major group, Seventh-day Adventists

have explored and embraced the Bible's message about health. How did we come to have a theology of health? Moreover, what are the main elements of it, as found in Scripture? This foundation and principles will not attempt to list all of our health-related beliefs. However, it will concentrate on why we have a health emphasis, i.e., our theology of health, especially as this emphasis developed in our movement's early years.

Like people who accept the Bible as the revealed Word of God, we base our theology of health on divine revelation. A theology of health should reveal God's plan about healthful living for the human race. However, even among Bible-believing Christians through the ages, so few have given any heed to such a thing. Throughout the Christian era, a survey of the literature shows that churches, in general, gave little attention to the relationship between healthful living and spirituality.

Dual Nature? Christians have frequently assumed that human beings have a dual nature, made up of body and soul. Those who believe this (dualism of the soul and body)—which is the spirit lives on once the body is dead— are unstained by the Bible. Many believe the intrinsic value of the soul as a significant part of a person, far superior to the body, which functions as a prison house for the soul in incongruent with the Hebrew concept of extinction at death (Eccl 9:5). Such a low opinion of the human body explains why, over the centuries, Christians have written so little on keeping the body in good health.

Health Reform Movement

In the 19th century, however, a new trend began to emerge, especially in the United States. The literature of that period reveals a growing emphasis on healthful

living, leading to the rise of the health reform movement, which had no particular religious base. This movement sought to bring about more excellent health and improved longevity by helping people reform their habits. Moreover, indeed, people were concerned about health. There was a general dissatisfaction with the medical profession and its growing agitation against the rising tide of intemperance.

Nevertheless, at that time, most Christians considered a disease as a divine punishment for sin. By contrast, health reformers, reasoning from cause to effect, refused to blame God for all conditions. Instead, they argued, the disease was caused by people's failure to follow the laws of nature. Early Leaders. In the 18th century, various Methodists and Quakers had already expressed concern over the growing alcohol consumption. In 1743, John Wesley appealed to Christians to abstain from drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in extreme necessity.¹

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The church's commitment to matters about health and health care remains strong. Generally, Adventists favor rational, scientific approaches to health care over pseudoscientific ones because laws of the natural world are of divine origin: Adventists accept the concept that natural remedies may be beneficial for treating disease in the

¹ He also opposed the use of snuff and tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician, and objected to the drinking of tea.

home situation. Such remedies should be rational and in harmony with the laws of physiology. Adventists would reject many of the current new-age forms of disease treatment because of their pseudoscientific nature and mystical basis outside the Christian teaching. While supportive of scientific medicine, Seventh Day Adventist theology is particularly compatible with ideas associated with health reform, for its holistic view of the human being dispenses with the traditionally sharp disjunction between body and soul that influenced the development of biomedicine. Recent studies show that Adventists who follow church teaching on healthful living have increased longevity.²

Theological Themes Corresponding to the Laurinburg Project

In the United States, Dr. Benjamin Rush, a well-known Quaker physician and one of the Declaration of Independence signers, and Lyman Beecher, a prominent preacher and college president, began writing and speaking out on the detrimental effects of alcohol. These powerful influences led to the American Temperance Society's establishment in 1826; ten years later, the American Temperance Union was established.³

One of the most outstanding health reform movement leaders was Sylvester Graham, who turned the movement into a moral crusade. His influence led to the American Physiological Society (1837) and the American Vegetarian Society (1850). Others who played a significant role in the health reform movement were Drs. Trall and Jackson, Dio Lewis, and Horace Mann.⁴

² Benjamin Rush, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body* (Boston, MA: Thomas and Andrews, 1790), 200 - 234.

³ Rush, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body*, 230.

⁴ John B. Blake, *Health Reform, The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1974), 36-44.

Unity, Not Dualism. When the Seventh-day Adventist movement emerged in this health reform climate, its followers were naturally exposed to the various health concepts being agitated. With so many people suffering from poor health due to intemperate living, the use of health-destroying substances, bad medical advice on treating disease, and ignorance regarding how to preserve health, Seventh-day Adventists began to see people as having been created with a holistic nature. They asserted that God created us as a unity of physical, mental, and spiritual faculties, each important for the human organism's harmonious, healthy operation. This view had far-reaching consequences for understanding the relationship between health and spirituality. Ellen G. White's Influence. Early Sabbath-keeping Adventist publications reveal a growing emphasis on the relationship between health and one's religious experience, the imminent coming of the Lord, and the

Mission thrust of the church. This growing interest cannot be due to the health reform movement alone. The visions of Ellen G. White had a profound impact on Adventists' understanding of the relationship between health and religion and the group's leaders' attitude toward healthful living. In fact, at first, the early Adventist literature made no references to the health reform movement. Our early publications emphasized several themes in their theological understanding of health.

Spirituality and Health MT Olive Laurinburg SDA Church

One of the first biblical arguments used to warn believers against the use of unhealthful substances concerning idolatry. In 1848, Ellen G. White had been shown the injurious effects of tobacco, tea, and coffee. As early as 1851, she linked these health

dangers to spiritual matters by calling the use of tobacco an idol. In the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, J. M. McLellan elaborated further by noting the connection between idolatry and covetousness. Citing such Scriptures as For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God (Eph 5:5), and Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry (Col 3:5), he concluded that those who use tobacco are idolaters, defiling the temple of God and that the Bible equates such idolatry with covetousness.⁵

J. H. Waggoner cited 1 John 5:21, little children, keep yourselves from idols, to warn believers to save themselves from the idol of tobacco.⁶ A little later, Ellen G. White also explicitly named tea and coffee as idols. Our pioneers also argued that our spiritual powers' complete development required all our mental faculties' full cooperation. Unhealthful habits impair cognitive capabilities. It follows that those who use health-destroying substances cannot be as good Christians as those who abstain from them.⁷

Moral Issue. An increasingly-frequent argument was that transgression of physical laws is a moral issue and thus a sinful act. God is the author of man's organic structure, our pioneers noted, which implies that God's will is as manifest in this organism as in the ten

⁵ John M. McLellan, "The Temple of God Is No Place for Idols," *Review and Herald* (October 1856): 182.

⁶ Joseph H. Waggoner, "Tobacco," *Review and Herald* (November 1857): 13.

⁷ Waggoner, "Tobacco," 13-19.

Commandments

Those who injure this divine artistry through unhealthful living conflict with the will of God. This resistance to God's precepts of holistic wellness is rebellion against God and sin. Therefore, they saw corruption as the transgression of the law, written by the finger of God in the whole organism of a man, as well as in the Bible. Unconscious violation of physical laws was considered a sin of ignorance. However, the conscious violation was a moral transgression: the act a sin, the actor a sinner.⁸ D. T. Bourdeau took a slightly different tack. He declared that using tea and tobacco was itself a transgression of the Decalogue. He said that using these health-destroying products violated the Decalogue's sixth commandment, which states, thou shalt not kill.⁹

Sabbath-keeping Adventists developed a growing appreciation of how significant the human body is for the believers' religious experience. They recognized that the physical body was not insignificant to spiritual life, as most other Christians believed but were the habitat of Gods Spirit. This view elevated the body's role to that of a temple in which the Divine Presence dwells.

Scripture Based

Believers cited Scripture in support of caring for this body-temple: Know you not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defiles the temple of God, he shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are (1 Cor 3:16, 17); what? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the

⁸ George Trask, "Popular Poisons," *Review and Herald* (October 1855): 62-63.

⁹ Daniel T. Bourdeau, "Tobacco and Tea," *Review and Herald* (March 1863): 125.

Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (1 Cor 6:19); and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (2 Cor 6:16).

The early pioneers identified the temple of God in 1 Corinthians 3:16 with the temple of the Holy Ghost in 1 Corinthians 6:19.12. In this light, James White could assert that it was quite unlikely that the Holy Spirit would dwell in those who followed the filthy, health-destroying, God-dishonoring practice of using tobacco or unhealthy substances like snuff and tea.¹⁰ Our pioneers saw health as also associated with Christian perfection. In appealing for the cleanliness of body, they cited especially 2 Corinthians 7:1: Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in fear of God.¹¹

Our pioneers saw health as also associated with Christian perfection. In appealing to the cleanliness of the body, they cited the Bible. They especially cited 2 Corinthians 7:1: “Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in fear of God.” For them, living to Gods glory involved treating the physical organism healthfully. After all, Scripture clearly stated, ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods (1 Cor 6:20), and whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31).¹²

¹⁰ John N. Andrews, “The Use of Tobacco a Sin Against God,” *Review, and Herald*, (April 1856): 4-5.

¹¹ James White, “Faith of Jesus,” *Review and Herald* (March 1854): 60.

¹² Ellen G. White, “Manuscript Releases,” Ms. 3 (1854): 370

Romans 12:1, they noted, taught the Christian to treat his body sacrificially: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.¹³

Christology, Eschatology, and Health in SDA Theology

Our Adventist pioneers related health to Christ's return. They saw healthful living as an indispensable facet of the believer's preparation for the Second Advent. Therefore, Joseph Bates stressed the need to clean body and spirit and perfect holiness (2 Cor 7:1; Isa 52:11). The continuation of unhealthful, defiling practices would prevent entrance into the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:27).¹⁴

Ellen G. White saw that using unhealthful substances would prevent a person's final sealing with the seal of the living God (Rev 7:1, 2). She also associated Christian perfection with the Second Advent, noting that Christ will have a church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing to present to his Father (see Eph 5:27).¹⁵

Similarly, Ellen White said that our souls, bodies, and spirits are presented blameless by Jesus to His Father (1 Thess 5:23). Furthermore, unless we are clean in person and pure in heart, we cannot be presented blameless to God. In referring to health-destroying practices, J. N. Andrews stated, "deceive not yourself. If you would stand with the Lamb

¹³ McLellan, *Temple of God*, 182.

¹⁴ Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God* (New Bedford, MA: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1849), 68.

¹⁵ Here, Ellen White also stated that we must be perfect Christians, deny ourselves all the way along, tread the narrow thorny pathway that our Jesus trod, and then, if we are final overcomers, heaven, sweet heaven, will be cheap enough.

on mount Zion (Rev 14:1), you must cleanse yourself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in fear of God” (2 Cor 7:1).¹⁶

Because of the imminent return of Christ, J. M. McLellan urged people to live healthfully and crucify the lusts of the flesh (Gal 5:24) because otherwise, it will be impossible to stand before the Lord at His coming.¹⁷

Holistic Health and Mission

Our rapidly expanding mission work brought ever-growing demands for financial support. Ellen White called for denying an unhealthful appetite so that money could be saved for the work of the Lord. In one of her appeals, she employed arguments of the economy of simplicity. Ellen White postulated healthful living and divine favor, stating that if all would study to be more economical in their articles of dress, and deprive themselves of some things which are not necessary, and lay aside such useless and injurious things as tea, and give what they cost to the cause, they would receive more blessings here, and a reward in heaven.¹⁸

From this overview of the experience of the early Adventists, one can see the workings of Providence in the rise of the Advent movement. In the setting of a health reform movement in the secular world, and with Adventist pioneer’s minds open to reform, the Lord impressed Adventists with the vital relationship between spirituality and the body’s health. They found a firm scriptural basis for being serious about matters of

¹⁶ Andrews, *The Use of Tobacco a Sin Against God*, 5.

¹⁷ McLellan, *Temple of God*, 182.

¹⁸ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years 1827-1862* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1985), 291-292.

health. They perceived that health habits were for personal well-being and played a vital role in the church's work in preparing for Christ's Second Advent. When these early believers became convicted of health reform's importance, they took steps to put these convictions. Moreover, they put them into action, ordering their lives in harmony with what the Lord had revealed. All funds saved by eliminating health-destroying substances and adopting a modest and simple lifestyle were to be invested in spreading the last message of mercy for a dying world.

Whenever Adventists continue to walk in this scriptural light on health reform, their work prospers; whenever they neglect this light, their work languishes. The success of the Advent movement depends on how faithfully its believers implement God's light.

Conclusions and Implications

The church's commitment to matters about health and health care remains strong. Generally, Adventists favor rational, scientific approaches to health care over pseudoscientific ones because "laws of the natural world are of divine origin. Adventists accept the concept that natural remedies may be beneficial for treating disease, particularly in the home situation. Such treatments should be rational and in harmony with the laws of physiology.

Recent studies show that Adventists who follow church teaching on healthful living have increased longevity. White male and white female Adventists in California live 7 ¹/₁. Years and 4 ¹/₂ years longer, respectively, than their California contemporaries. Further, Adventists who live a low-risk lifestyle-high physical activity, vegetarian diet,

frequent consumption of nuts, and medium body mass show a 10-year advantage in life expectancy, compared to those Adventists who have a high-risk lifestyle.¹⁹

For Adventists, God has given humans freedom of choice with the provision that they use their space responsibly. This freedom extends to decisions about medical care. As a requirement for responsible decision making, persons should be adequately informed about their condition, the treatment choices, and the possible outcomes. With consideration for others' interests and with the help of divine guidance, a person should be given the respect deserved by self-determining individuals.

Chemical dependency is a biopsychosocial-spiritual disorder that encompasses every aspect of an individual's etiology, expression, prevention, and treatment. The debilitating effects of this disease process are not confined solely to the afflicted person but are also experienced by the family and others associated with the chemically dependent individual. This chemical dependency view emphasizes that the disease's prevention, expression, and treatment involve the same principles. Thus, the entire process of chemical dependency is seen as more fundamental than a particular drug's chemistry or an individual's physical response to a specific medicine. Since alcohol and tobacco are drugs, the church advocates abstinence from both.²⁰

The Seventh-day Adventist Church advocates complete abstinence from unclean foods as outlined in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, as well as alcohol, coffee, tea, and other stimulating foods. It has encouraged vegetarianism, arguing that meat consumption

¹⁹ The essence of this postulation indicates the correlation between cancer and diet among Seventh-day Adventist.

²⁰ Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines*, 2nd ed (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 17-38.

can increase atherosclerosis, cancer, kidney disorders, osteoporosis, and trichinosis.

However, the church does not require strict vegetarianism, nor does it prohibit the use of eggs, cheese, and other dairy products.²¹

The doctrine of total depravity only partially reflects Adventism's optimistic view of human nature. By this, we mean that while we believe there is truly nothing we can do to gain our salvation, we think we can do something to cooperate with God. First, we can reason well; God created this capability. In submitting ourselves to the indwelling Spirit of God (justification), we open ourselves to new possibilities for our present life. Second, with God's help, we can habituate positive lifestyles and personal character traits. This process (sanctification) includes our positive efforts—efforts energized by God's Spirit in our lives.²² Stewardship: God calls humankind to be good stewards of all He has provided in His creation, including our physical bodies. With specific reference to our health, this doctrine of stewardship means we must use our time, energies, and resources in ways that both respect and bring glory to God. Adventists take the biblical account of the Garden of Eden and the extraordinary life that Adam and Eve enjoyed as a narrative of the ideal.

The Great Controversy theme in the Bible portrays that this ideal was destroyed at the onset of sin. Throughout salvation history, God's purpose is to restore humankind and the rest of his creation to this Edenic perfection. In this process of restoration, part of our moral responsibility is to uphold and practice, as best we can, the ideal diet and lifestyle

²¹ Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines*, 2nd ed (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 17-38.

²² Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe A Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines*, 2nd ed (Boise, ID: Pacific Press; 2005), 17-23.

God intended. Adventist theology of the Sabbath is strongly influenced by this notion that God's original plan was for humankind to enjoy a Sabbath rest. Moreover, and that this rest was, at least in part, designed to enhance the well-being of every person. For Adventists, the problem of sin and evil is placed firmly at the feet of Lucifer, that old devil called Satan in the Bible. Human suffering in the face of evil is profoundly troubling to Adventists. They are motivated to evangelize because they do not want people to suffer in sin. While some Christians believe God brings suffering as a means of moral development for humankind, Adventists believe that Satan is the cause of human suffering. God, on the other hand, is the one who makes all good things emerge in the wake of evil and suffering. God is never the cause of human suffering. God is always the one who lifts persons out of suffering through loving presence—God's love is present in His message of holistic healing.

The Adventist Church's view of the relationship between sin, suffering, and a loving God's will likely frame responses to people's queries about "Why does God let me suffer?" Such a situation could prompt an Adventist SDA churches, who assesses that self-disclosure is appropriate, to say something like: "I believe Satan is to blame; we can find hope in knowing that good will ultimately triumph over evil" or "I know it is hard to understand 'why?' from our present perspective, but I think God is with us now and God's love will one day prevail and end suffering."

While the Adventist Church has issued statements about the call to care for God's creation by respecting our physical environment, the theology supporting Christian service for the community is more appropriate in discussing holistic wellness. A recent addition to Adventist fundamental beliefs gives evidence of theological concern for how

we engage our wider community. The concept is titled: “Growing in Christ,” a portion of it reads as follows: In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, participating in the mission of the church. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and witness His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience.²³

A theology of engagement with the community in Seventh-day Adventism is two-fold. It must begin within the fellowship of our community of faith. This communal fellowship is where our relationship with God is nourished and encouraged. Furthermore, while it inherently has sectarianism elements, a fundamental premise of our theology of relationship with God and his church insists that the individual takes the turn of engagement with the broader society.

A motivating factor for engaging the broader community comes from what Christians call “the great commission.” Matthew 28:16-20 gives the details of Jesus commissioning his disciples to do certain things in his absence. They were to spread throughout the world, teaching others about Jesus and baptizing these students in the process of making disciples of them. This push to spread the good news of Jesus was coupled with the idea that the end of time would come when the gospel was spread throughout the whole world (see Matt 24:14). So, in an important sense, Adventists believe that as they engage in their communities with the good news of Jesus and his care for others, they hasten His second coming.

²³ Celeste P. Walker, *Making Sabbath Special: Simple Traditions to Make the Sabbath a Delight* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1999), 30-50.

Traditionally, spirituality was viewed as part and parcel of religion, and it has been distinguished from religion. Research on Faith and Health has undertaken only within the past few decades, as some segments of society became more secular and disenchanted with traditional religious institutions. Unfortunately, in the effort to separate highly personal experience from formalized theology and rituals, the literature sometimes implies that spirituality is “good,” a mature developmental achievement. In contrast, religion is “bad,” hampered by external trappings and social convention. The various facets and literature features have been a particularly active forum for discussions about spirituality and health. A commitment to providing holistic care has been part of the impetus. For work in this area and is reflected in attempts to avoid mechanistic or reductionistic explanations. Descriptions have focused on concepts such as life principle or unifying force, unfolding mystery, inner strength (e.g., joy, peace), and harmonious interconnectedness with self, others, a higher power, and the. Some of these constructs are problematic from a research vantage point because their referents are broad and vague. They include some of the health outcomes that they purport to predict (e.g., hope, peacefulness, self-esteem, social affiliation). However, most writers agree that spirituality involves a personal concern with meaning and transcendence- a belief that what is “seen” is not all there is.

These concerns may or may not be grounded in institutional beliefs and practices. Whether this concern for the transcendent, for something outside of oneself, necessarily involves the sacred is a matter of some debate. This research would suggest that the holy is an essential element. Being captivated by a sunset, a sports team, or a political campaign is not intrinsically a spiritual experience simply because one feels connected to

something larger than oneself. However, if these experiences are imbued with a sense of connection with the sacred, or ultimate reality, or things as they are, that would represent a spiritually significant experience. The ordinary activities of everyday life can thus become invested with spiritual meaning, as is the case for a Buddhist focusing mindfully on sweeping the steps or eating a raisin, a Jew reciting a prayer while washing her hands, or a Catholic who views preparing a meal as a sacrament.

In sum, religion and spirituality are multifaceted, overlapping constructs whose specific definitions remain a subject of debate; however, there is some agreement about these terms' general outlines and boundaries. This research project is an excellent example of collaborative efforts to identify the essential characteristics of these constructs; both religiousness and spirituality were seen as reflecting the feelings, thoughts, experiences, and Research on Faith and Health behaviors that arise from a search for the sacred encounter with Christ through His Word, prayer, nature and various other realms and avenues. In this paper, we use “spirituality” to refer to personal concerns with the transcendent—with something sacred, ultimate, or beyond superficial appearance. Spirituality may or may not be embedded in a formal, established religious tradition. We use the general terms Theological, as a heuristic or metric to engage theological dimensions,” and “religious orientation” synonymously to refer to both the personal and social/ institutional aspects of engagement with an established faith tradition.

Relative to these broad terms, we use “Theological or spiritual coping” more specifically to designate particular efforts to manage the demands of a specific, challenging situation (e.g., diagnosis of heart disease, coronary artery bypass surgery).

However, given the lack of consensus on particular definitions, in this domain, this project will seek to define and describe various theological components to delineate what we mean by theological foundations and spirituality in the context of holistic health and wellness.

The Mt Olive SDA Adventist Churches take literally and sincerely Jesus' call to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (MK 16:15). For many Adventist churches, providing health care is the right arm of the gospel (an metaphor Ellen White often used to describe the salient role of medical missionary work). Therefore, in this directive, Adventist SDA churches find a calling to serve God by serving others. Laurinburg, SDAC is thus understood as an intrinsically moral undertaking and an ethical mandate—a form of benevolence. Another passage in the biblical gospel motivates Adventist SDA churches to serve the sick. The passage in Matthew 25:31 makes clear, according to Adventist interpretation, at least one thing: those who fail to care for the needs of their neighbors in the most basic of ways will in no case be allowed to inherit eternal life. Adventists desire to be counted among the "sheep" in this parable; its meaning has always provided the impetus to serve others, although some Adventist SDA churches may provide holistic theology of a self-centered desire to practice the right lifestyle to earn heaven. Other SDA churches recognize such service results from personal knowledge of God's love. Perhaps the essential theological motivation for service to others is the acceptance that Jesus is the model for how believers ought to treat others. Jesus' life and ministry, while here on earth, is a constant encouragement for the Mt Olive SDA Church in Laurinburg, NC, to care for others holistically.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The Interdisciplinary Foundation implies that we must educate members for both disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise. Interdisciplinary education must supplement disciplinary teaching and learning so members can learn how to respond to challenges that transcend disciplines. Moreover, work in the confluence of multiple disciplines, and develop research trajectories that do not conform to standard disciplinary paths; and this is essential to this study in a Biblical Holistic Hermeneutic of Wellness in Laurinburg project.

Interdisciplinary subjects are pivotal for this interdisciplinary education, teaching how to understand, navigate, and employ multiple and often contrary ways of knowing. In these subjects, students develop a meta-knowledge about different disciplines, methods, and epistemologies and learn how to purposefully and reflectively integrate and synthesize different perspectives to advance understanding and solve problems in the quest for holistic wellness. Nevertheless, because of the complexity of working across multiple ways of knowing, interdisciplinary subjects are challenging to teach members. This guide intends to provide materials and strategies to support the successful design, organization, teaching, and evaluation of interdisciplinary subjects. What are the interdisciplinary topics? In an interdisciplinary issue, members will explore and integrate multiple perspectives from different disciplines, sub-disciplines, and expertise areas. This

is different from what might be called a multidisciplinary subject, which juxtaposes numerous views on the same.

Topic Without Integration

Interdisciplinarity involves a synthesis or balance of multiple perspectives to produce such things as a more in-depth understanding or illumination, a balanced judgment, a viable solution, or a product that creatively accommodates the different views. We define interdisciplinary understanding as to the capacity to integrate knowledge and modes of thinking in two or more disciplines or established areas of expertise to produce a cognitive advancement. This advancement entails explaining a phenomenon, solving a problem, or creating a product – in ways that would have been impossible or unlikely through single disciplinary means related to holistic wellness.

The defining features of interdisciplinary subjects are first, some interdisciplinary move or cognitive operation, and second, integrative structure, which is the intended result of the interdisciplinary operation. Integration is the critical move or process for interdisciplinary learning, and other possibilities are translation, balancing, accommodation, synthesis, or making connections between multiple perspectives. Numerous integrative structures may result in an interdisciplinary interpretation or explanation, conceptualization, theory or meta-theory, resolution or solution, more profound understanding or illumination, model, metaphor, product, policy, narrative, taxonomy, rule, or application. Members need to learn meta-disciplinary skills, attitudes, and understandings if they are to make these interdisciplinary moves and produce the integrative structures to facilitate holistic Biblical health and wellness. Teaching these

explicitly is essential because members are unlikely to have learned them previously, given the concentration on disciplinary teaching in much of the education system. In particular, interdisciplinary students need to learn how to occupy different disciplinary perspectives and to talk critically but reasonably across these perspectives. They need to comprehend and translate disciplinary languages, ways of knowing, and methods, and then balance, synthesize, and integrate them. Students need interdisciplinary collaboration skills to work in cross-disciplinary and disciplinary interpretation and synthesis skills if they incorporate information from multiple disciplines. Also, interdisciplinary students must learn to interrogate numerous ways of knowing and the structure of knowledge itself. They must develop a reflective and explicit understanding of how disciplines work, the issues and problems they can address, the strengths and limitations of each domain, and the possibilities of interaction.

The main content for interdisciplinary subjects is often a topic or area of study best approached from multiple disciplines. While this is common, the range of interdisciplinary subjects can also be the skills that will be useful for interdisciplinary work. An interdisciplinary logic or critical thinking subject would teach these interdisciplinary skills and then apply them in various disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts. What are the generic objectives of interdisciplinary subjects? The previous description of interdisciplinary topics can be summarized in a set of generic goals for any interdisciplinary subject. On completion of an interdisciplinary issue, students should have interdisciplinary skills, understandings, and attitudes. In particular, students or members should: be able to occupy and understand different disciplinary perspectives; be able to evaluate knowledge from a broad range of disciplines critically; be able to engage

in interdisciplinary inquiry and problem-solving, employing multiple ways of knowing; have a meta-disciplinary understanding of the nature of knowledge and the disciplines; be able to integrate, synthesize, balance and accommodate understanding from multiple disciplines to produce something more significant than would be possible from anyone disciplinary perspective. Do interdisciplinary subjects require disciplinary depth?

The hallmark of interdisciplinarity is meta-disciplinary understandings and skills, and the development of these is the main objective of an interdisciplinary subject. Students in these subjects should learn how to access, understand, employ, and synthesize various disciplines' expertise. They do not undertake these subjects to learn disciplinary expertise and knowledge. Nevertheless, it is commonly thought that a necessary precondition of interdisciplinarity is disciplinary depth, and so it is believed that interdisciplinary subjects should teach both interdisciplinary skills and disciplinary expertise. However, this is a mistaken view. There are at least two different interdisciplinary researchers, and based on this, at least two different kinds of interdisciplinary subjects. Both of these have as their primary aim the teaching of multidisciplinary skills and understandings, but only one requires disciplinary depth as a precondition.

The SDA church's views on health reflect an interdisciplinary theology that holds that all things must be interpreted finally regarding the Bible. Practically, one should have a sound body and mind to render the most effective service to God and others. One central Adventist belief is that men and women are made in God's image with the freedom and power to think and act. Though each is created a free being, every person is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and soul, dependent upon God for life and all else.

According to Adventist theology, the care of the body-either personally, socially, or institutionally-is fully an expression of Christian commitment. Since Adventists believe that personal health is a God-given trust essential to one's preparation for the Second Advent, people have a responsibility to care for their bodies.

The Bible reveals God's interest in health for the body, not just for the soul. More than any other major group, Seventh-day Adventists have explored and embraced the Bible's message about health. How did we come to have a theology of health? Furthermore, what are the main elements of it, as found in Scripture? This Theoretical foundation will not attempt to list all of our health-related beliefs, but it will concentrate on why we have a health emphasis in our theology. Moreover, it outlines a health emphasis on holistic wellness, especially as this emphasis developed in our movement's early years.

Like people who accept the Bible as the revealed Word of God, we base our theology of health on divine revelation. A theology of health should reveal God's plan about healthful living for the human race. However, even among Bible-believing Christians through the ages, so few have given any heed to such a thing. Throughout the Christian era, a survey of the literature shows that churches, in general, gave little attention to the relationship between healthful living and spirituality.

Dual Nature

Christians have frequently assumed that human beings have a dual nature, made up of body and soul. In holistic, integrated wellness, those who believe this way should value the soul as the significant part of a person, far superior to the body, which functions

as a prison house for the soul. Such a low opinion of the human body explains why, over the centuries, Christians have written so little on keeping the body in good health.

Health Reform Movement. In the 19th century, however, a new trend began to emerge, especially in the United States. The literature of that period reveals a growing emphasis on healthful living, leading to the rise of the health reform movement, which had no particular religious base. This movement sought to bring about more excellent health and improved longevity by helping people reform their habits. Furthermore, indeed, people were concerned about health. There was a general dissatisfaction with the Seventh-Day medical profession and many Seventh Day Adventist health institutions' growing agitation against the rising tide of intemperance.

Nevertheless, at that time, most Christians considered a disease as a divine punishment for sin. By contrast, health reformers, reasoning from cause to effect, refused to blame God for all illnesses. Instead, they argued, the disease was caused by people's failure to follow the laws of nature.¹

Early Leaders

In the 18th century, various Methodists and Quakers had already expressed concern over the growing alcohol consumption. In 1743, John Wesley appealed to Christians to abstain from drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in extreme necessity.²

¹Blake, *Health Reform, The Rise of Adventism*, 36, 46-49.

² Wesley was precocious in his insights of formative holistic biblical hermeneutic of health for the Christian church.

The church's commitment to matters about health and health care remains strong. Generally, Adventists favor rational, scientific approaches to health care over pseudoscientific ones because laws of the natural world are of divine origin: Adventists accept the concept that natural remedies may be beneficial for treating disease in the home situation. Such remedies should be rational and in harmony with the laws of physiology. Adventists would reject many of the current new-age forms of disease treatment because of their pseudoscientific nature and mystical basis outside the Christian teaching. While supportive of scientific medicine, Seventh Day Adventist theology is particularly compatible with ideas associated with health reform, for its holistic view of the human being dispenses with the traditionally sharp disjunction between body and soul that influenced the development of biomedicine. Recent studies show that Adventists who follow church teaching on healthful living have increased longevity.³

Theological Themes Corresponding to Laurinburg Project

In the United States, Dr. Benjamin Rush, a well-known Quaker physician and one of the Declaration of Independence signers, and Lyman Beecher, a prominent preacher and college president, began writing and speaking out on the detrimental effects of alcohol. These powerful influences led to the American Temperance Society's establishment in 1826; ten years later, the American Temperance Union was established.⁴

³ Benjamin Rush, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body* (Boston, MA: Thomas and Andrews, 1790), 1-30.

⁴ Rush, *An Inquiry into the effects of Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body*, 17-30.

One of the most outstanding health reform movement leaders was Sylvester Graham, who turned the movement into a moral crusade. His influence led to the American Physiological Society (1837) and the American Vegetarian Society (1850). Others who played a significant role in the health reform movement were Drs. Trall and Jackson, Dio Lewis, and Horace Mann.⁵

Unity, Not Dualism

When the Seventh-day Adventist movement emerged in this health reform climate, its followers were naturally exposed to the various health concepts being agitated. With so many people suffering from poor health due to intemperate living, the use of health-destroying substances, bad medical advice on treating disease, and ignorance regarding how to preserve health, Seventh-day Adventists began to see people as having been created with a holistic nature. They asserted that God created us as a unity of physical, mental, and spiritual faculties, each important for the human organism's harmonious, healthy operation. This view had far-reaching consequences for understanding the relationship between health and spirituality. Ellen G. White's Influence. Early Sabbath-keeping Adventist publications reveal a growing emphasis on the relationship between health and one's religious experience, the imminent coming of the Lord, and the mission thrust of the church. This growing interest cannot be due to the health reform movement alone. The visions of Ellen G. White had a profound impact on Adventist's understanding of the relationship between health and religion and the group's leaders' attitude toward healthful living. In fact, at first, the early Adventist literature

⁵ Blake, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Spiritous Liquors on the Human Body*, 36-44.

made no references to the health reform movement. Our early publications emphasized several themes in their theological understanding of health.

Spirituality and Health MT Olive Laurinburg SDA Church

One of the first biblical arguments used to warn believers against the use of unhealthful substances concerning idolatry. In 1848, Ellen G. White had been shown the injurious effects of tobacco, tea, and coffee. As early as 1851, she linked these health dangers to spiritual matters by calling the use of tobacco an idol.

In the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, J. M. McLellan elaborated further by noting the connection between idolatry and covetousness. Citing such Scriptures as For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God (Eph 5:5), and mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry (Col 3:5), he concluded that those who use tobacco are idolaters, defiling the temple of God and that the Bible equates such idolatry with covetousness.⁶

J. H. Waggoner cited 1 John 5:21, little children, keep yourselves from idols, to warn believers to save themselves from the idol of tobacco.⁷ A little later, Ellen G. White also explicitly named tea and coffee as idols. Our pioneers also argued that our spiritual powers' complete development required all our mental faculties' full cooperation.

⁶ J. M. McLellan, "The Temple of God Is No Place for Idols," *Review and Herald* (October 1856): 182-190.

⁷ Joseph H. Waggoner, "Tobacco," *Review and Herald* (November 1857): 13.13.

Unhealthful habits impair cognitive capabilities. It follows that those who use health-destroying substances cannot be as good Christians as those who abstain from them.⁸

Moral Issue

An increasingly-frequent argument was that transgression of physical laws is a moral issue and thus a sinful act. God is the author of man's organic structure, our pioneers noted, which implies that God's will is as manifest in this organism as in the Ten Commandments. Those who injure this divine artistry through unhealthful living conflict with the will of God. This is rebellion against God and sin. Therefore, they saw corruption as the transgression of the law, written by the finger of God in the whole organism of a man, as well as in the Bible. Unconscious violation of physical laws was considered a sin of ignorance. However, the conscious violation was a moral transgression: the act a sin, the actor a sinner.⁹

D. T. Bourdeau took a slightly different tack. He declared that using tea and tobacco was itself a transgression of the Decalogue. He said that using these health-destroying products violated the Decalogue's sixth commandment, which states, thou shalt not kill.¹⁰

Sabbath-keeping Adventists developed a growing appreciation of how significant the human body is for the believers' religious experience. They recognized that the physical body was not insignificant to spiritual life, as most other Christians believed but

⁸ Waggoner, "Tobacco," 178.

⁹ George Trask, "Popular Poisons." *Review and Herald* (October 1855), 62, 63.

¹⁰ Daniel Bourdeau, "Tobacco and Tea," *Review and Herald* (March 17, 1863): 125.

were the habitat of Gods Spirit. This view elevated the body's role to that of a temple in which the Divine Presence dwells.

There is a Scripture Base

Believers cited Scripture in support of caring for this body-temple: Know you not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defiles the temple of God, he shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are (1 Cor 3:16, 17); what? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (1 Cor 6:19); and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (2 Cor 6:16).

They, the early pioneers, identified the temple of God in 1 Corinthians 3:16 with the temple of the Holy Ghost in 1 Corinthians 6:19.12. In this light, the body is the temple of God. James White could assert that it was quite unlikely that the Holy Spirit would dwell in those who followed the filthy, health-destroying, God-dishonoring practice of using tobacco or unhealthful substances like snuff tea.¹¹

Our pioneers saw health as also associated with Christian perfection. In appealing for the cleanliness of body, they cited especially 2 Corinthians 7:1: Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in fear of God.¹²

¹¹ John N. Andrews, "The Use of Tobacco a Sin Against God," *Review, and Herald* (April 10, 1856): 5.

¹² James White, "Faith of Jesus," *Review and Herald* (March 14, 1854): 6

For them, living to Gods glory involved treating the physical organism healthfully. After all, Scripture clearly stated, ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods (1 Cor 6:20), and whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31).¹³

Romans 12:1, they noted, taught the Christian to treat his body sacrificially: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.¹⁴

Christology, Eschatology, and Health in SDA Theology

Our Adventist pioneers related health to Christ's return. They saw healthful living as an indispensable facet of the believer's preparation for the Second Advent. Therefore, Joseph Bates stressed the need to clean body and spirit and perfect holiness (2 Cor 7:1; Isa 52:11). The continuation of unhealthful, defiling practices would prevent entrance into the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:27).¹⁵

Ellen G. White saw that using unhealthful substances would prevent a person's final sealing with the seal of the living God (Rev 7:1, 2). She also associated Christian perfection of character with the Second Advent, noting that Christ will have a church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing to present to his Father (see Eph 5:27).¹⁶

¹³ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, 7 (1854): 370.

¹⁴ J. M. McLellan, "The Temple of God Is No Place for Idols," *Review and Herald* (October, 1856): 182.

¹⁵ Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God* (New Bedford, MA: Benjamin Lindsey Press, 1849), 68.

¹⁶ White, *The Early Years 1827-1862*, 224. Here she also stated that we must be perfect Christians, deny ourselves all the way along, tread the narrow thorny pathway that our Jesus trod, and then if we are final overcomers, heaven, sweet heaven, will be cheap enough.

Similarly, she said that our souls, bodies, and spirits are to be presented blameless by Jesus to His Father [1 Thess 5:23] and unless we are clean in person and pure in heart, we cannot be given blameless to God. In referring to health-destroying practices, J. N. Andrews stated, deceive not yourself. If you would stand with the Lamb on mount Zion [Rev 14:1], you must cleanse yourself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in fear of God (2 Cor 7:1).¹⁷

Because of the imminent return of Christ, J. M. McLellan urged people to live healthfully and crucify the lusts of the flesh (Gal 5:24) because otherwise, it will be impossible to stand before the Lord at His coming.¹⁸

Holistic Health and Mission

Our rapidly expanding mission work brought ever-growing demands for financial support. Ellen White called for denying an unhealthful appetite so that money could be saved for the work of the Lord. In one of her (Ellen White) appeals, she employed arguments of economy, healthful living, and divine favor, stating that if all would study to be more economical in their articles of dress and deprive themselves of some things which are not necessary, and lay aside such useless and injurious things as tea. Moreover, give what they cost to the cause; they would receive more blessings here and a reward in heaven.¹⁹

¹⁷ Andrews, "The Use of Tobacco a Sin Against God," 5.

¹⁸ McLellan, "The Temple of God Is No Place for Idols," 182.

¹⁹ Arthur L White, *Ellen G White: The Early Years, 1827-1862*, 291, 292.

From this overview of the experience of the early Adventists, one can see the workings of Providence in the rise of the Advent movement. In the setting of a health reform movement in the secular world, and with Adventist pioneers' minds open to reform, the Lord impressed Adventists with the vital relationship between spirituality and the body's health. They found a firm scriptural basis for being serious about matters of health. They perceived that health habits were for personal well-being and played a vital role in the church's work in preparing for Christ's Second Advent. When these early believers became convicted of health reform's importance, they took steps to put these convictions into action. They implemented them in their lives in harmony with what the Lord had revealed to them. All funds saved by eliminating health-destroying substances and adopting a modest and simple lifestyle were to be invested in spreading the last message of mercy for a dying world. Whenever Adventists continue to walk in this scriptural light on health reform, their work prospers; whenever they neglect this light, their work languishes. The success of the Advent movement depends on how faithfully its believers implement God's light.

Conclusions and Implications

The church's commitment to matters about health and health care remains strong. Generally, Adventists favor rational, scientific approaches to health care over pseudoscientific ones because the natural world laws are of divine origin.

Adventists accept the concept that natural remedies may be beneficial for treating disease, particularly in the home situation. Such treatments should be rational and in harmony with the laws of physiology.

Recent studies show that Adventists who follow church teaching on healthful living have increased longevity. White male and white female Adventists in California live 7 Years longer, respectively, their California contemporaries. Further, Adventists who live a low-risk lifestyle-high physical activity, vegetarian diet, frequent consumption of nuts, and medium body mass show a 10-year advantage in life expectancy, compared to those Adventists who have a high-risk lifestyle.

For Adventists, God has given humans freedom of choice with the proviso to use their space responsibly. This freedom extends to decisions about medical care. As a requirement for responsible decision making, persons should be adequately informed about their condition, the treatment choices, and the possible outcomes. With consideration for others' interests and with the help of divine guidance, a person should be given the respect deserved by self-determining individuals.

Chemical dependency is a biopsychosocial-spiritual disorder that encompasses every aspect of an individual's etiology, expression, prevention, and treatment. The debilitating effects of this disease process are not confined solely to the afflicted person but are also experienced by the family and others associated with the chemically dependent individual. This chemical dependency view emphasizes that the disease's prevention, expression, and treatment involve the same principles. Thus, the entire process of chemical dependency is seen as more fundamental than a particular drug's chemistry or an individual's physical response to a specific medicine. Since alcohol and tobacco are drugs, the church advocates abstinence from both.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church advocates complete abstinence from unclean foods as outlined in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, as well as alcohol, coffee, tea, and

other stimulating foods. It has encouraged vegetarianism, arguing that meat consumption can increase atherosclerosis, cancer, kidney disorders, osteoporosis, and trichinosis. However, the church does not require strict vegetarianism, nor does it prohibit the use of eggs, cheese, and other dairy products.

The doctrine of total depravity only partially reflects Adventism's optimistic view of human nature. By this, we mean that while we believe there is truly nothing we can do to gain our salvation, we think we can do something to cooperate with God. First, we can reason well; God created this capability. In submitting ourselves to the indwelling Spirit of God (justification), we open ourselves to new possibilities for our present life. Second, with God's help, we can habituate positive lifestyles and personal character traits. This process (sanctification) includes our positive efforts—efforts energized by God's Spirit in our lives.

Stewardship: God calls humankind to be good stewards of all He has provided in His creation, including our physical bodies. With specific reference to our health, this doctrine of stewardship means we must use our time, energies, and resources in ways that both respect and bring glory to God. Adventists take the biblical account of the Garden of Eden and the beautiful life that Adam and Eve enjoyed as a narrative of the ideal.

The Great Controversy theme in the Bible portrays that this ideal was destroyed at the onset of sin. Throughout salvation history, God's purpose is to restore humankind and the rest of his creation to this Edenic perfection. In this process of restoration, part of our moral responsibility is to uphold and practice, as best we can, the ideal diet and lifestyle God intended. Adventist theology of the Sabbath is strongly influenced by this notion that God's original plan was for humankind to enjoy a Sabbath rest. Moreover, and that this

rest was, at least in part, designed to enhance the well-being of every person. For Adventists, the problem of sin and evil is placed firmly at the feet of Lucifer, that old devil called Satan in the Bible. Human suffering in the face of evil is profoundly troubling to Adventists. They are motivated to evangelize because they do not want people to suffer in sin. While some Christians believe God brings suffering as a means of moral development for humankind, Adventists believe that Satan is the cause of human suffering. God, on the other hand, is the one who makes all good things emerge in the wake of evil and suffering. God is never the cause of human suffering. God is always the one who lifts persons out of suffering through loving presence—God’s love is present in His message of holistic healing.

An Adventist Church view of the relationship between sin, suffering, and a good God’s will likely frame responses to people’s queries about “Why does God let me suffer?”

Such a situation could prompt an Adventist SDA churches, who assesses that self-disclosure is appropriate, to say something like: “I believe Satan is to blame; we can find hope in knowing that good will ultimately triumph over evil” or “I know it is hard to understand ‘why?’ from our present perspective, but I think God is with us now and God’s love will one day prevail and end suffering.”

While the Adventist Church has issued statements about the call to care for God’s creation by respecting our physical environment, the theology supporting Christian service for the community is more appropriate in discussing holistic wellness. A recent addition to Adventist fundamental beliefs gives evidence of theological concern for how we engage our wider community. Titled “Growing in Christ,” a portion of it reads as

follows: In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, participating in the mission of the church. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and witness His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience.²⁰

A theology of engagement with the community in Seventh-day Adventism is two-fold. It must begin within the fellowship of our community of faith. This communal fellowship is where our relationship with God is nourished and encouraged. Furthermore, while it inherently has sectarianism elements, a fundamental premise of our theology of relationship with God and his church. The notion prevails and insists that the individual takes the turn of engagement with the broader society to share the love of God holistically.

A motivating factor for engaging the broader community comes from what Christians call “the great commission. Matthew 28:16-20 gives the details of Jesus commissioning his disciples to do certain things in his absence. They were to spread throughout the world, teaching others about Jesus and baptizing these students in the process of making disciples of them. This push to spread the good news of Jesus was coupled with the idea that the end of time would come when the gospel was spread throughout the whole world (see Matt 24:14). So, in an important sense, Adventists believe that as they engage in their communities with the good news of Jesus and his care for others, they hasten His second coming.

²⁰ Walker, *Making Sabbath Special: Simple Traditions to Make the Sabbath a Delight*, 1-38.

The Mt Olive SDA Adventist Churches take literally and sincerely Jesus' call to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (MK 16:15). For many Adventist churches, providing health care is the right arm of the gospel (an metaphor Ellen White often used to describe the salient role of medical missionary work). Therefore, in this directive, Adventist SDA churches find a calling to serve God by serving others. Laurinburg, SDAC is thus understood as an intrinsically moral undertaking and an ethical mandate—a form of goodwill. Another passage in the biblical gospel motivates Adventist SDA churches to serve the sick. The passage in Matthew 25:31 makes clear, according to Adventist interpretation, at least one thing: those who fail to care for the needs of their neighbors in the most basic of ways will in no case be allowed to inherit eternal life. Adventists desire to be counted among the "sheep" in this parable; its meaning has always provided the impetus to serve others, although some Adventist SDA churches may provide Holistic service out of a self-centered desire to be among those who will get to go to heaven. Others will recognize such service results from personal knowledge of God's love. Perhaps the essential theological motivation for service to others is the acceptance that Jesus is the model for how believers ought to treat others. Jesus' life and ministry, while here on earth, is a constant encouragement for the Mt Olive SDA Church in Laurinburg, NC, to care for others holistically.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

This paper endeavors to reflect on how each of my foundations—points to integral elements in my project. This is a synthesis of the various conclusions in a cohesive, coherent statement about my hypothesis. This presupposition and excursive and discursive exploration will delve into the four foundations that I will ground and undergird my project. This integration encompasses Historical, Biblical, and Theological, Theoretical, Interdisciplinary integration.

The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. This project's theoretical foundation pivots revolve and devolves upon the ontological notion of Holistic Health and Mission.

The Mt Olive SDA Adventist Churches take literally and sincerely Jesus' call to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mar 16:15). For many Adventist churches, providing health care is the right arm of the gospel (a metaphor Ellen White often used to describe the salient role of medical missionary work). Therefore, in this directive, Adventist SDA churches find a calling to serve God by serving others.

Laurinburg, SDAC is thus understood as an intrinsically moral undertaking and an ethical mandate—a form of benevolence. Another passage in the biblical gospel motivates Adventist SDA churches to serve the sick. The passage in Matthew 25:31 makes clear, according to Adventist interpretation, at least one thing: those who fail to care for the needs of their neighbors in the most basic of ways will in no case be allowed to inherit eternal life. Adventists desire to be counted among the “sheep” in this parable; its meaning has always provided the impetus to serve others. Although some Adventist SDA churches may provide Holistic service out of a self-centered desire to be among those who will get to go to heaven, others will recognize such service results from personal knowledge of God’s love. Perhaps the essential theological motivation for service to others is the acceptance that Jesus is the model for how believers ought to treat others. Jesus’ life and ministry, while here on earth, is a constant encouragement for the Mt Olive SDA Church in Laurinburg, NC., to care for others holistically.

Old Testament Beliefs Regarding Health and Healing

This study primarily covers healing in Psalm 103:3 and 3John 1:1-3. In 103:3b, the Lord is described as *הַרְפֵּא לְכָל־תַּחֲלָאִיכִי*, “[the one] who heals all your diseases.” God is thus described with a definite participle of *רפא*, “to heal.” The concepts of forgiveness in 103:3a and healing in 103:3b are meant to influence each other, as they stand in explicit parallelism to each other. 3 John 1:1-3,” The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. Beloved, I pray that in all respects, you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers” (NASB).

In verse 1, the author of 3 John identifies himself as “the elder” and identifies this epistle’s recipient as “Gaius.” Also, the writer communicates to Gaius that he loves him employing the truth. In verse 2, the author tells Gaius that he prays for him that he may prosper and be in good health as his soul prospers. Verse 3 presents the reason why John prays for Gaius, namely that he heard from other Christians that he was walking through the truth.

Historical Foundations Integration

The MT Olive SDA Church in Laurinburg is a study in Biblical Hermeneutic in holistic wellness. Moreover, this approach to holistic wellness grounds its ontology, epistemology, axiology in historical foundations of holistic wellness’s modern principles. Furthermore, the interconnections of historical Adventists’ holistic wellness principles that are transcultural are not informed by current needs in the Laurinburg SDA church. This Biblical Hermeneutic of “Holistic Wellness” for (LNCSDAC) will use historical analyses to study many changes forces’ interplay over time in holistic strategies. This project envisages various Holistic Wellness outcomes anticipated in the project:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the interplay of the fundamental historical forces (cultural, social, economic, scientific, and theological) that have shaped the contemporary practices, good/insufficient in holistic wellness in (LNCSDAC).
2. Describe the historical processes that have contributed significantly to change in holistic wellness in MT Olive SDA.
3. Articulate an understanding of the histories of holistic wellness and ideologies necessary to participate in an analysis of critical

formulation and deployment of a Biblical Hermeneutic of Holistic Wellness for MT Olive SDA Church Laurinburg, NC.

4. Demonstrate critical reasoning skills necessary to analyze the lived realities of disparate holistic health practices in MT Olives SDA.
5. Reflect upon the nature of history holistic wellness in the SDA itself as a product influenced by a nexus of forces, interests, and understandings, and on their place within that historical context in MT Olive SDA in Laurinburg.

Methodology

Selecting a suitable research design and methodology is a matter of logic.

Research design is a roadmap that guides the planning of the research. The research design methods are used to answer various research questions. The research design is outstanding because it guides the researcher to know the type of questions to ask and what elements to include. Osmer argued that knowledge of the design is crucial in a research study. Osmer depicts a contemporary practical theology framework, including *descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic tasks*. Each of these tasks correlates with a controlling question that one asks of a ministry environment or praxis.

The following methods are used to answer various research questions:

1. According to Osmer, research on a contextual matter begins with the question: What is going on? He proposes a method that he refers to as priestly listening, deconstructing the story, discovering the cultural context, and investigating the problem, employing a diversity of theories Osmer.¹ Here in *this section*, mapping the terrain, the research will focus on the actual empirical state of contemporary health practices in Laurinburg, NC. Seventh-Day Adventist Church (LNCSDAC) in a holistic health context. A scientific-based questionnaire in this phase of the study will be administered, focusing on the Holistic Health elements in the MT Olive—

¹ Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 6-9.

LNCSDAC and other items. This survey is going to cover approximately 20 members.

2. Osmer's second phase of research now turns to the question; why is it going on? Moreover, it refers to this question as to the researcher's interpretative task—theoretical reflection, discovering principals to guide new strategies and explore the past and present practices.² Here in *this section*, the research will be drawing on theories in the sciences: *Social-Psychology, Health* to understand the patterns and dynamics better, and to explain seemingly why contemporary “*holistic practices in the MT Olives Laurinburg, NC. SDAC*” is creating such disparate episodes. This field places the empirical data into a broader context and comprehensive explanatory framework, asking the question: Why is this going on? In the interpretive task, Practical Theology offers explanations and attempts to point to patterns or themes in contemporary and past health practices of the MT Olive—(LNCSDAC). The methodology of this normative.³ Section: What Ought to be Going On? The discourse on holistic wellness will be a vivid and visually dramatic, and radical transformation of the MT Olive (LNCSDAC) discipleship.

3. Thirdly, this section will employ a multi-layered and multi-dimensional method. The objective is to analyze and derive Biblical-Hermeneutic, holistic norms from specific texts of Psalm 103:2 and 3 John 1:1-3 in the biblical Canon. This process is guided by a multi-dimensional hermeneutic. This approach does not mean that one superior method in the process of integrating or amalgamating the strong points of various exegetical strategies. This approach attempts to understand and establish the relationship between certain holistic Biblical-Hermeneutic facets of the text and context.

4. The pragmatic task; Osmer's fourth phase. Finally, in chapter six, the pragmatic study considers how this area of contemporary holistic Biblical-Hermeneutic health practices might be shaped to embody more fully the normative commitments of the Biblical-Hermeneutic principles of holistic health in the context of LNCSDAC. The research in chapter four will propose integrated-integrating Biblical-Hermeneutic strategies and tactics to bring cohesion to the seemingly irreconcilable disparate areas of dissonance in many fragmented unhealthy, emotional, physical, spiritual episodes. The broader aim is to sketch a Biblical-Hermeneutic of holistic health that will be a metric so that the function and purpose of holistic health can regulate the form and method of “holistic health” in the LNCSDAC. The research in this phase endeavors to deploy a Biblical-Hermeneutic polemical momentum from the OT and the NT, which will crescendo into a Holistic literary apex of integrating-integrative holistic health principles. The end goal anticipated is a cohesive theological biblical hermeneutic

² Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 6-10.

³ Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 6-12.

of holistic wellness, body, mind, and soul for the members and the community of the ministry context.

Data Collection—Qualitative Research Method

Here, in *phase-two* of this chapter, the research will present *empirical* data on the actual state of and episodes in Laurinburg SDA. Osmer proposes a method that he refers to as priestly listening or a process of deconstructing the story, discovering the cultural context, and investigating the problem, employing a diversity of theories Osmer. Here in this chapter, “*Mapping the 4Terrain*,” the research will focus on the actual descriptive-empirical state of contemporary qualitative research methods of data collection that do not involve collecting data that involves numbers or a need to be deduced through a mathematical calculation. Instead, it is based on the non-quantifiable elements like the feeling or emotion of the researcher. An example of such a method is an open-ended questionnaire.

The Collection Tools May Include:

- Face to Face In-depth Interviews
- Entails Mail
- Include Online
- Include Phone
- Entail groups
- Entail web-chats

⁴Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 2008.

The researcher may be using triangulation? (Example: three methods for gathering data might include participant journals, interviews, surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, etc.). My approach and process entail triangulation: Triangulation refers to using multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena. Triangulation also has been viewed as a qualitative research strategy to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources. The three methods I will use are:

- Interviews
- focus groups
- surveys

The researcher will use the Reflexive Journaling. Reflexive journaling is essential in qualitative research because there are so many ways that researcher bias could affect the study, from creating data gathering tools to collecting the data, analyzing it, and reporting it. Understanding these effects can be an essential part of the research process.

Reflexivity is the process of reflecting on yourself, the researcher, to provide more effective and impartial analysis. It involves examining and consciously acknowledging the assumptions and preconceptions you bring into the research, shaping the outcome. None of us are detached, objective observers.

Bracketing is a method used in qualitative research to mitigate the potentially deleterious effects of preconceptions that may taint the research process. However, the processes through which bracketing takes place are poorly understood, partly due to a shift away from its phenomenological origins.

The research operates through practical experiences and not theories. Qualitative research is a methodology in which data generates in the form of words and observations, rather than numbers. This method facilitates investigating subjective experience, as the best way to learn about people's narratives is by listening to their stories.⁵

The survey consists of twelve questions from Psalms 103:1-5 and thirteen questions from 3John 1:1-3. The responses' format was five options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree.

Results Pre-Intervention Survey

Survey results were analyzed by sorting and summing participant responses and comparing response percentages. The first set of questions answers are derived from Psalm 103:1-5. The second set of question responses are derived from 3John 1:1-3.

Moreover, juxtaposed against that—is the idea of validating competence (sufficient knowledge, judgment, skill, or strength) in this process. This implicit and embedded process is an internalized understanding of a language that ordinary people possess, enabling them to produce and understand their context's language employing their content. Their experience, which allows them to observe, encounter, of the undergoing of things generally as they occur over time: to learn from experience; the range of human experience—is inimical and incomparable. This process of giving “Voice” is genuinely empowering and has created an inflection-point (a moment when a significant change occurs or may occur)—in this research model.

⁵ Carl Auerbach and Louise B. Silverstein, *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2003). 23.

Their wisdom, which is a quality or state of being wise; knowledge of what is true or right coupled with just judgment as to action; sagacity, discernment, or insight is the best portal to engage in “*Giving Voice*” interpretive analytic action base research dynamic. This ordinary interpretive analytics context occurs in the commonplace or average explicit undistinguished condition of their everyday zeitgeist (which is their general intellectual, moral, and cultural climate of their environment). There were twenty-three participants.

Table 1. Psalm 103:1-5 Forgiveness/Healing Pre-Intervention Survey

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Psalm 103:1-5 tells us, how do you define forgiveness from Psalm 103:1-5?	3.14%				18.86%
2. How does forgiveness impact your health according to Psalm 103:1-5?			1.4%	3.13%	19.83%
3. Is forgiveness required according to Psalm 103:1-5?			1.4%	3.13%	19.83%

4. Is it correct that I need to forgive before praying, according to Psalm 103:1- 5?	2.9%	1.4%	2.9%	8.35%	10.43%
5. According to Psalm 103:1-5, Is forgiveness like judgment and condemnation?	4.17%			6.26%	13.57%
6. According to Psalm 103, 1- 5—do we need to forgive if the trespasses continue?	1.4%	1.4%		6.26%	15.65%
7. How do I know if God has forgiven me according to Psalm 103:1-5?	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	8.35%	12.52%
8. How many times do I need to forgive when the wrong- doer repents?				4.17%	19.85%

9. Learning to let go of hurt and pain, according to Psalm 103:1- 5.			1.4%	5.22%	17.74%
10. Why is it hard to forgive, according to Psalm 103:1- 5?			2.9%	5.22%	16.69%
11. We can find out whom to forgive according to Psalm 103:1- 5?	3.13%	1.4%	2.9%	9.39%	8.35%
12. Psalm 103:1- 5 describes what healing looks like?			2.9%	10.43%	11.48%

Table 2. Questions on healing and Holistic wellness from 3 John 1:1-3

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. What does wish, above all things, bring to the table?	1.4%			10.44%	12.52%
2. What does it benefit to prosper the mind-body and soul?	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	8.35%	12.52%

3. Is forgiveness required according to 3John 1:1-3?	3.13%	2.9%	1.4%	5.22%	12.52%
4. According to 3John 1:1-3, Sometimes, God chooses to go in a different direction in healing?			1.4%	10.44%	12.52%
5. According to 3John 1:1-3, Is forgiveness like judgment and condemnation?	2.9%	2.9%	1.4%	5.22%	13.56%
6. According to 3John 1:1-3- do we need to forgive if the trespasses continue?				4.17%	19.83%
7. What does a good place look like in 3John1:1-3?			2.9%	7.30%	14.61%
8. In 3 John 1:1- 3, how many times do I need to forgive when the wrong-doer repents?		2.9%		6.26%	15.65%
9. Can we learn to let		1.4%		5.22%	17.74%

go of hurt and pain according to 3John 1:1-3?					
10. Why is it hard to forgive, according to 3John 1:1-3.			2.9%	4.17%	17.74%
11. We can find out what is going on in my church according to 3John 1:1-3?			9.39%	5.22%	9.39%
12. We can find out why holistic healing is not going on in our church according to 3John 1:1-3?				7.30%	10.44%
13. Can you find out what ought to be going on in our church according to 3 John 1:1-3?			5.22%	7.30%	11.48%

Survey results were analyzed by sorting and summing participant responses and comparing response percentages around the four principal conceptual frameworks of Osmer. The data analytics and interpretive process groups around four fundamental questions in Osmer's methodology:

- What is going on in the Laurinburg SDA church?
- Why is it going on the Laurinburg SDA church?

- What Ought to be going on in the Laurinburg SDA church?
- How to implement change to the current praxis?

Implementation

Question: What is going on in the Laurinburg SDA church from the survey questions? We can find out what is going on in my church, according to 3John 1:1-3? The survey question number eleven—data depicts (9-people, or 39% of 23 respondents) believe that 3John1:1-3 illuminates what is going on in Laurinburg SDA about the holistic biblical framework of wellness. The inference in the responses strongly suggests that a holistic wellness biblical framework and praxis are absent in an intentional way in 3John 1:1-3. In question 1 of the OT text—Psalm 103:1-5 tells us How to define forgiveness from Psalm 103:1-5? Eighteen out of twenty-three respondents (18, 86% stated they strongly agree that the text outlines how to forgive. It appears they are filtering the text through a biased lens that is subconscious and affecting their ability to read the content of the text in its context. This approach may strongly color their view of holistic wellness in Laurinburg Mt Olive.

Question: Why are the respondents registering this notion on the following survey question 4? Is it correct that I need to forgive before praying, according to Psalm 103:1-5? Ten respondents out of twenty-three stated that Psalms 103:1-5 stipulates to forgive before praying (10, 43%). The interpretive inference here is that they are engaged in critical inferential analysis. This deduction advances the notion that the forgiveness of YHWH is directly predicated on asking forgiveness for sin. Hence, this underlying assumption that is asking for forgiveness proceeds YHWH's forgiveness of iniquities.

Question: What ought to be going on in Laurinburg Mt Olives, according to the respondents? Question six According to Psalm 103, 1-5—do we need to forgive if the trespasses continue? Sixty-five percent or fifteen people strongly agree (15,65%--and 6,26%) six agree that one needs to forgive if the offense continues to see in the text the stipulation to forgive if the trespasses continue. This may be an issue that the majority of the respondents are grappling with within their personal lives. Hence, clear biblical principles are needed to transmit to them to affect changes in this dynamic of holistic healing.

Summary of Learning:

The data presentation is intended to ascertain valuable narratives that emerge in the in-depth survey questions (Osmer, 2008:10-11, 61-64). The data collection is of observation, use of interviews, and questioning methods of actual practices. The chapter endeavored to ask the question: How might a *descriptive-empirical* analysis capture and convey what is going on in the comprehension and understanding of Biblical holistic wellness in the Laurinburg SDA church. The researcher's objective, considering this question, was to reflect critically and constructively on the dynamic and challenging concepts of the current practices and comprehension of a "*Biblical Hermeneutic of Holistic Wellness*" in the context of the data from the survey respondents in the Laurinburg SDA Church in North Carolina. The following insight and descriptive-empirical perspectives glean from the survey.

- The survey respondents overwhelmingly adduce and deduce a relationship between Biblical Holistic Wellness at least implied in Psalm 103:1-5 and 3John

1:1-3. However, this relationship or correlation is implied and not overt and explicit in the text. The inferred is that the data shows the respondents want to know how this Biblical Holistic Wellness may improve their spiritual, emotional, physical, and social wellness and empower their transformation as effective disciples of Christ.

- The oscillation between the experiential and the logical, rational (cognitive) displays on the chronological pendulum—swing between forgiveness and holistic wellness experienced intuitively—emotively and derived cognitively (intellect) tenets from the Biblical text needs to be addressed with clear Biblical exposition and application.
- The subordinate concept that emerges is the need to comprehend and understand how to forgive what Biblical principles can and should form and inform the practice and process of forgiveness in the Bible?
- How do Biblical Holistic Wellness principles of forgiveness affect and effect spiritual, emotional, social, and cognitive wellness to influence and impact transformation and a closer personal relationship with Christ to be Living Human Hermeneutic Documents of holistic wellness and disciples for Christ in Laurinburg NC SDA?

Biblical hermeneutics principles of holistic health (healing) wellness in this research can be codified and delineated as:

- It is characterized by the treatment of the whole person, considering mental, emotional, spiritual, and social factors rather than just the physical aspect of healing or wellness. Holistic Health -Wellness is, in essence, an approach to life.

Rather than focusing on illness or specific parts of the body, this integrated Biblical approach to health considers the whole person and how they interact with their spiritual environment. It emphasizes the connection of mind, body, and spirit. In this context, integrated, holistic wellness is the interconnection between God's forgiveness and wholeness or wellness and healing.

- The texts of Psalm 103:1-5; 3John 1:1-2—makes it clear that while forgiveness and healing are distinguishable, they are interrelated and interdependent— you cannot have one without the other. In other words, you cannot have holistic healing: mental, emotional, physical, social, spiritual—without God's forgiveness of our sins and our forgiveness of others that have offended us.
- The integrated hybrid treatment and interventions consisted of various strategic power-points, Videos on holistic wellness, lectures, sermons, and interactive group activities to remedy or affect changes in the comprehension and internalization of the biblical hermeneutic principle of forgiveness and holistic wellness and healing.

Summary of Learning

Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #1

1. The OT text—Psalm 103:1-5 tells us what is going on in the Laurinburg SDA church?

Psalm 103:1-5 (*clearly*) tell us how to define forgiveness from Psalm 103:1-5?

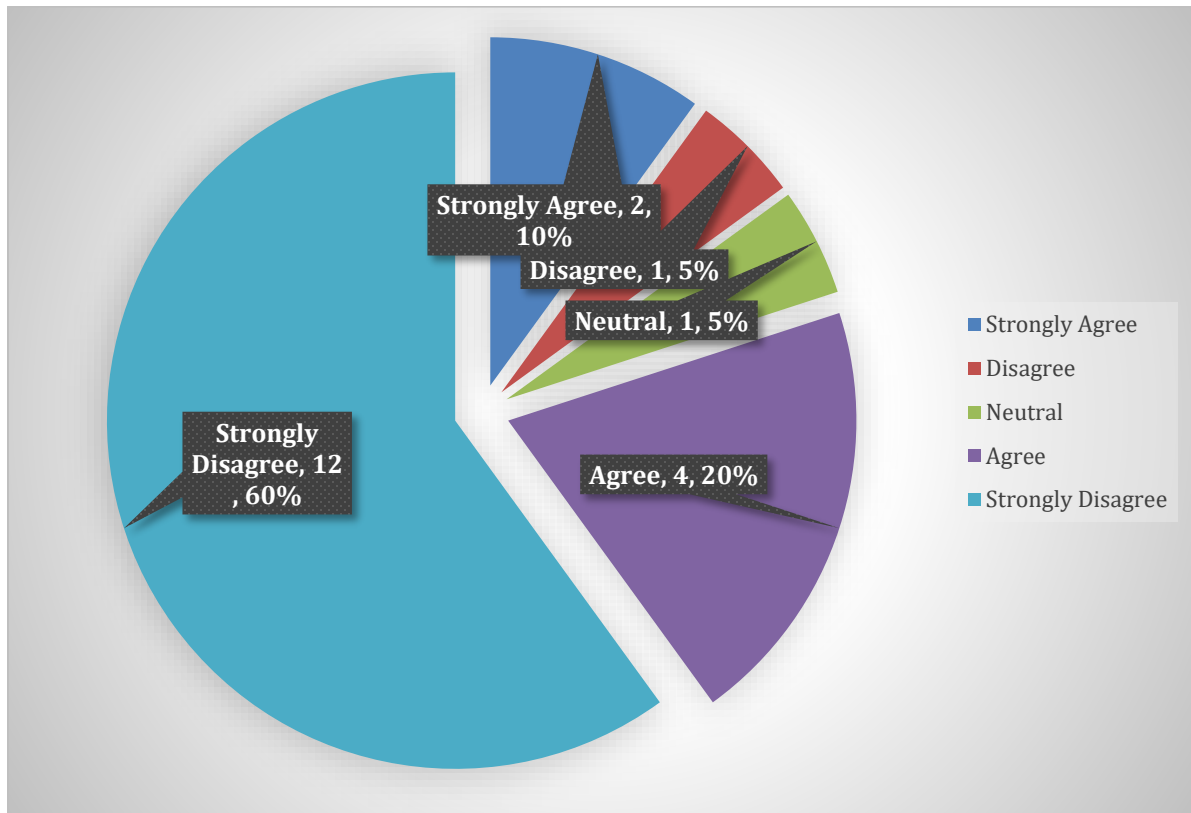


Figure 1.1. Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #1 Data

The treatment-intervention listed a psychological definition of forgiveness and a formulated biblical definition of forgiveness and then asked respondents if these elements are in Psalm 103:1-5.

Biblical definition of forgiveness: The Hebrew word behind “lift up” is נָשָׂא (*nasa*, Strong’s #5375) and means to take hold of something and lift it up, either to move or remove it. This very same Hebrew word is also used in the following verse. The Hebrew word סָלַח (*salahh*, Strong’s #5545) is also translated as forgive and is used in the next verse where the forgiveness of iniquity is being paralleled with the healing (or lifting up) of diseases. *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases.* (RSV, Psalm 103:2,3). By investigating other

words that are related to סלה (salahh), we can see that this word has a very similar meaning to נשא (nasa):

- סלד (salad, Strong's #5539) means "to leap up."
- סלע (sala, Strong's #5553) is a "cliff" (a wall that is lifted up).
- סלק (salaq, Strong's #5559) means "to ascend."

The psychological definition of forgiveness: Psychologists generally define forgiveness as a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness. Forgiveness does not mean forgetting, nor does it mean condoning or excusing offenses. Though forgiveness can help repair a damaged relationship, it does not obligate you to reconcile with the person who harmed you or release them from legal accountability.

After the treatment-intervention (12, respondents-or %60) strongly disagreed and one respondent or %5, the text clearly defined forgiveness. While the text intimates a correlation, it does not explicitly delineate a concise, clear definition of forgiveness and holistic wellness; it is implied in the text.

Implication

The treatment and intervention illuminate that (12 out of 20 respondents or %60 and one %5 out of 20 respondents or %65 percent disagree) after the treatment-experienced greater clarity and comprehension of the biblical relationship between healing and forgiveness, and this correlation is needed to facilitate transformation in

Laurinburg, NC SDA; interpersonally (within oneself) intra-personally (between members) and trans-personally with God, first and foremost for optimum functional maximum holistic wellness as disciples for Christ.

Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #2

2.The New Testament of 3John 1:1-3 tells us how to find out what is going on in Laurinburg SDA church according to 3John 1:1-3?

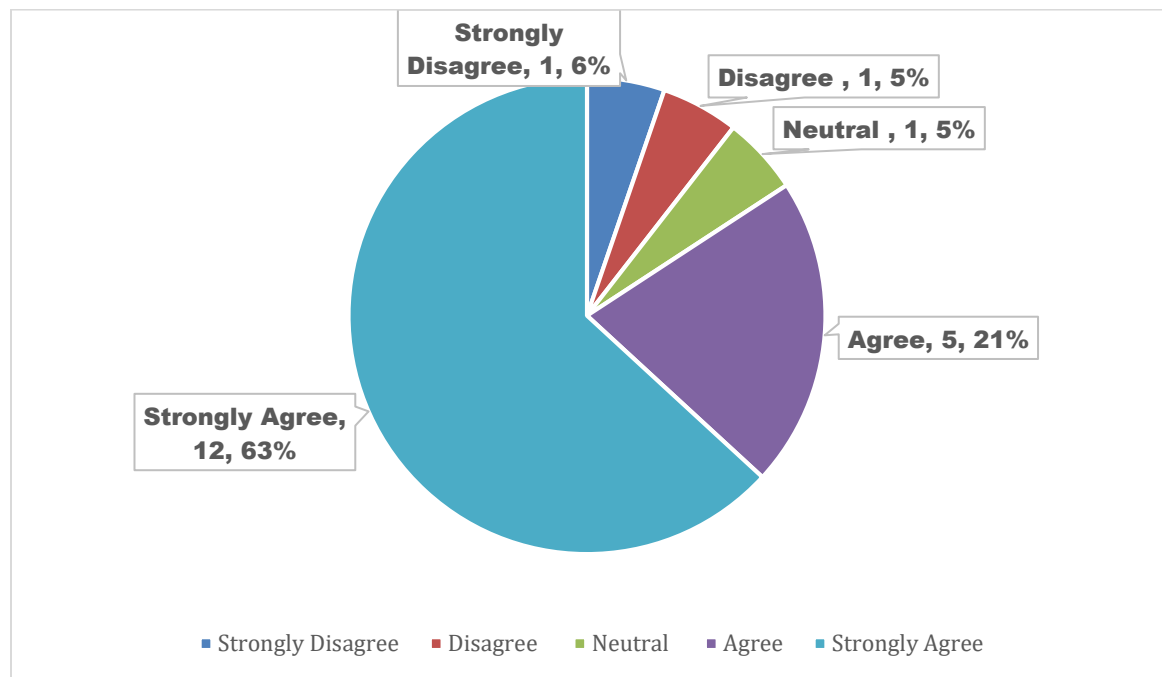


Figure 1.2. Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #2 Data

The aim and objective of this treatment-intervention and the subsequent post-survey question were to index or ascertain the members' comprehension and analysis of what the text of 3John 1:1-2 3 illuminates what is going on in Laurinburg SDA about a holistic biblical framework of wellness. Moreover, that is needed but does not tell us clearly how to attain or implement this holistic wellness in an integrated way. 3John 1:1-

3 does teach clearly and imply the concept of holistic wellness strongly. The inference in the responses strongly suggests that holistic wellness biblical framework and praxis are absent in an intentional way according to 3John 1:1-3 in Laurinburg. However, the text implies a relationship between “*soul prosperity*” (forgiveness of sins) and holistic wellness and healing.

The “*Pre-test*” survey revealed questions number eleven—data depicts (9-people, or 39% of 23 respondents) believe that 3John1:1-3 illuminates what is going on in Laurinburg SDA, a holistic biblical framework of wellness. However, they did not discern clearly how to attain or holistic, integrated wellness in a concise way.

Implication:

After the various treatment-interventions, the respondents state 12/20 or %63 strongly agree, and 5/20 or %21 (84%) percent of respondents “agree” that the text does teach the concept of holistic wellness. The inference in the responses strongly suggests that holistic wellness biblical framework and praxis are absent in an intentional way according to 3John 1:1-3 in Laurinburg. However, the text implies a relationship between soul prosperity (forgiveness of sins) and healing. Therefore %84 of respondents see correlations of the 3John 1:1-2 and embrace the concept that this principle and practice is currently absent in Laurinburg SDA and is vitally needed in spiritual, social, emotional, and didactic wellness teachings in Laurinburg in a vital way to empower and transform the church and community.

Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #3

3. Why are the respondents in the Laurinburg SDA church indicating that one needs to forgive before praying is embedded in the text of Psalms 103:1-5? Is forgiveness required according to Psalm 103:1-5? We can find out what is going on in my church, according to 3John 1:1-3?

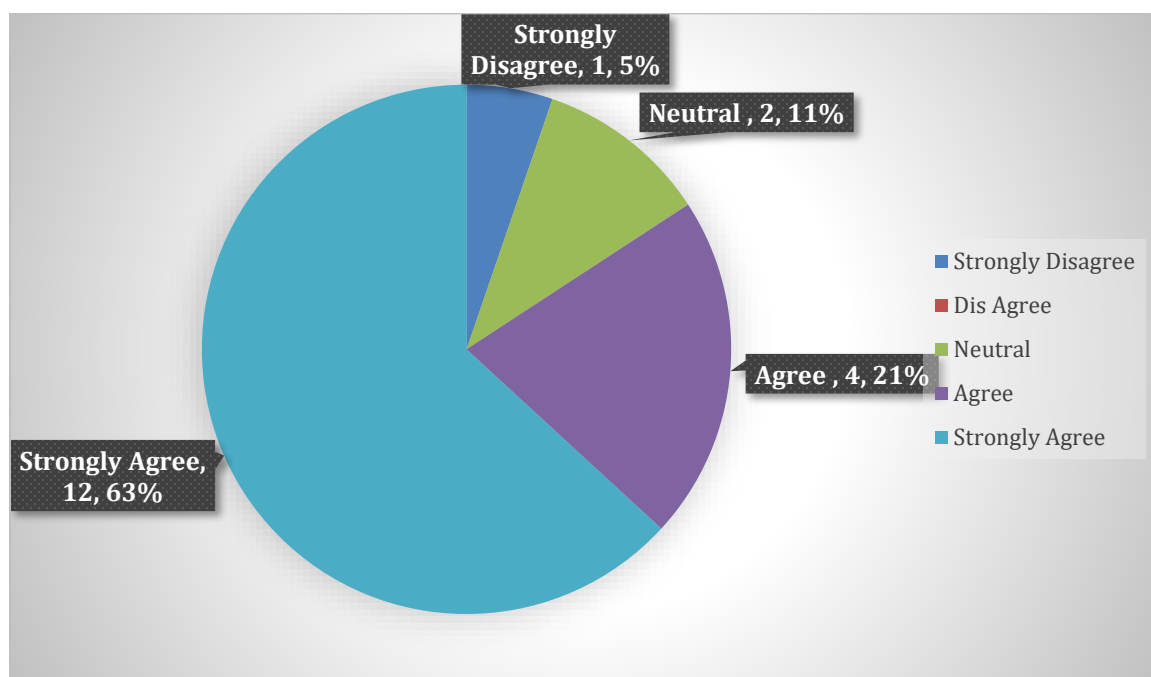


Figure 1.3. Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #3 Data

In the pretest, the respondents in question 4 state 10,43% (10/23 respondents) strongly agree and eight respondents, or %35, agree once I forgive others' offenses before asking God for holistic healing and wellness. Therefore 78% of respondents, or 18 people out of 20 respondents, agree that there is a need to forgive others before asking God for holistic wellness and healing in prayer.

Here, the research cites or shares a sample of the treatment to highlight the members' need to practice clear forgiveness principles to experience holistic healing and wellness when they ask God in prayers for His mercy.

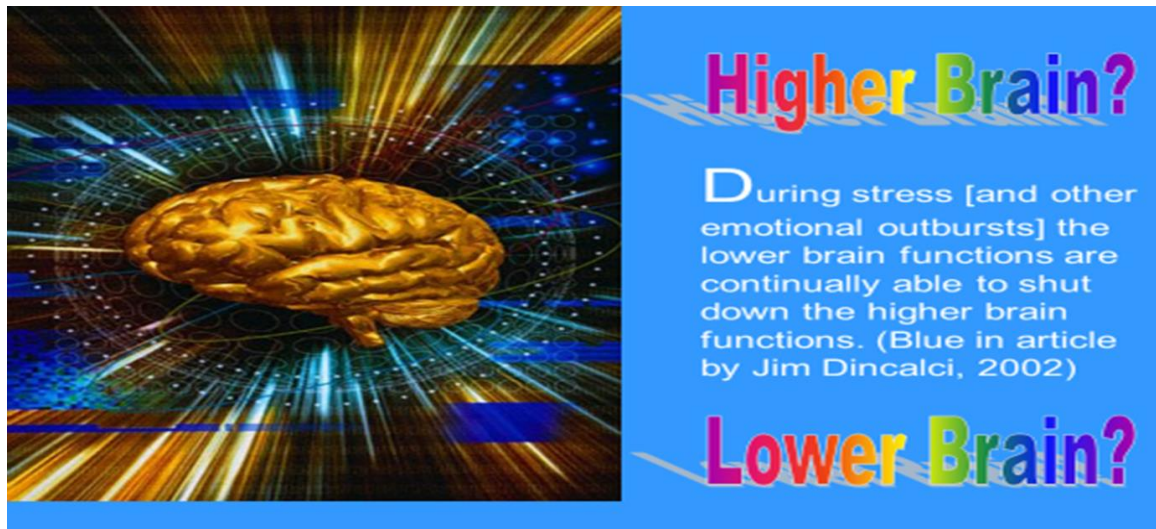


Figure 1.4. Higher and Lower Brain (Used with permission)

Nevertheless, new research finds a possible correlation between prolonged unforgiveness and anger and how it causes stress and anxiety and structural degeneration of the prefrontal cortex's hippocampus and impaired functioning. This means that the wear and tear caused to the brain by chronic stress or anxiety could be tied to an increased risk of depression and dementia. Family trauma: abuse, neglect, experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, incarceration of family members, family substance abuse, the sudden or expected loss of a loved one.

Implications

After the treatment-intervention, 12/20 or 84% strongly agree/agree that one must ask God to help them forgive before they are to claim God's forgiveness and healing and

holistic wellness in Psalms 103:1-5. There is a substantial increase in the percentages of the scores after the treatment. This score suggests that reading the text interdisciplinary method increases their comprehension and analysis of the text's social, neurological, philosophical, and theological understanding of the text employing this biblical hermeneutic of holistic wellness.

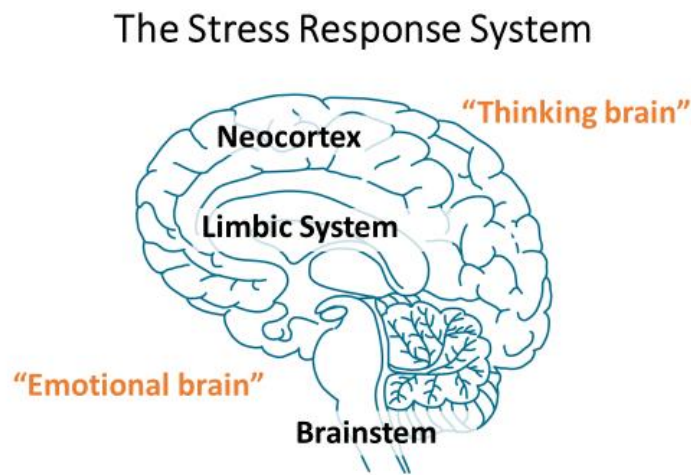


Figure 1.5. The Stress Response System Thinking Brain and Emotional Brain

The brain has a built-in alarm system designed to detect a potential threat and help the body respond quickly and effectively to keep us safe. Let us talk about the brain's three main parts, and each play's role in the stress response.

Review each part in order, starting with the brainstem. Brainstem: The brain stem is located at the bottom of the brain and controls all of the major systems needed to keep us alive, including heart rate and breathing. The brain stem prepares the body to react in a threatening situation. Limbic System: The limbic system is the emotional control center of the brain. This part of the brain determines how we feel about an experience (e.g.,

pleasurable or frightening), looks out for danger, and reacts accordingly. Within the limbic system, two areas play crucial roles in the stress response. A structure called the amygdala acts like a smoke detector to identify a potential threat and sound the alarm. The hypothalamus hears the alarm and communicates that message to the rest of the body so that we are prepared to respond. Together, we can think of the limbic system and the brain stem as the “emotional brain.”

Neocortex

The neocortex is the last part of the brain to develop and is known as the “thinking brain.” This part of the brain is responsible for reasoning, planning, problem-solving, making meaning of our experiences, and regulating our emotions and behaviors. When faced with a threat, the thinking brain helps us decide when we are actually in danger and return to a state of calm after the risk and danger have passed.

The Stress Response System

1. The amygdala senses threat and sets off the alarm.
2. Thinking brain assesses the situation.
3. Thinking brain goes off-line. Emotional brain activates fight or flight response.
4. Thinking brain helps shut off the alarm and helps us to calm down.

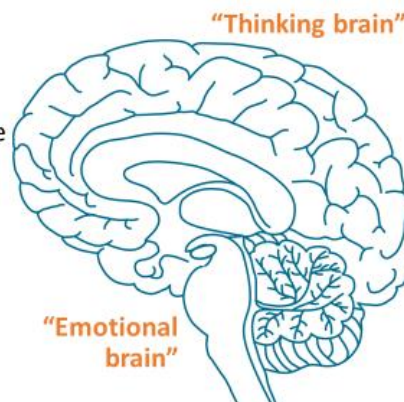


Figure 1.6. The Stress Response System Thinking Brain and Emotional Brain

Let us walk through the stress response step by step to break down what is happening and in what order.

Step 1. The *emotional brain* senses a threat and sounds the alarm that sends a message to the body to react. This happens at an automatic and unconscious level.⁶ For example, if you hear a loud noise, you immediately jump before you even know whether you are in danger. It is important to remember that we react first and think second when faced with a potential threat.

Step 2. *The thinking brain* assesses the situation to see whether the danger is real or just a false alarm.

Step 3. If the thinking brain confirms the threat is real, it temporarily goes “offline,” and the emotional brain takes over and starts the “fight or flight” response. Hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol, are released to give the body the energy to fight or flee and calm down once the threat has passed—similar to the gas and brake pedals in a car. Changes that happen when the stress response is activated include increased heart rate and blood pressure, rapid breathing, sweating, tunnel vision, and difficulty thinking clearly. When neither fighting nor fleeing is an option at the moment, we may “freeze” or shut down during a threatening situation. For younger children who cannot fight or flee, shutting down may be their best option for dealing with overwhelming stress.⁷

Step 4. Once the threat has passed, the thinking brain helps shut off the alarm, and the body puts the brakes on to allow us to calm down and come back into balance.

Unforgiveness and anger, resentment, hate, jealousy, envy cause stress in the brain; it affects the mind-body connection. This is why there is a need to forgive and to experience healing and wellness impeded in the texts of Psalm 103:1-5 and 3John 1:1-2.

We are subject to stress hormones when we think about the harm we experienced. When we mull over the offense repeatedly, we continuously expose us to the stress hormones and their physical consequences. Our energy gets drained when we fight

⁶ McGill University. (n.d.). *The brain from top to bottom*. Retrieved from <http://thebrain.mcgill.ca/avance.php>.

⁷ B .L. Seaward, *Managing Stress: Principles and Strategies for Health and Well-Being*. (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett, 2006), 20-88.

memories or try to cover them up. We are too tired to exercise or communicate with people. We isolate ourselves. The emotions we face from the hurt and the cover-up have psychological consequences. Forgiveness removes these consequences and restores our health.

The following texts in the treatment-intervention amply the principles of Psalm 103:1-5 and 3 John 1:1-2 of holistic forgiveness wellness. God requires us to forgive. Jesus could not have been more explicit than this statement: For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. However, if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matthew 6:14-15 (NIV) We need to do to others what we want to be done to us: Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Luke 6:37, NIV.

Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #4

4. Psalm 103:1-5 Outlines to us in Laurinburg SDA What ought to be going on in the context of God's forgiveness of our sins as a condition or prerequisite to holistic wellness? Question four According to Psalm 103, 1-5—do we need to forgive if the trespasses continue?

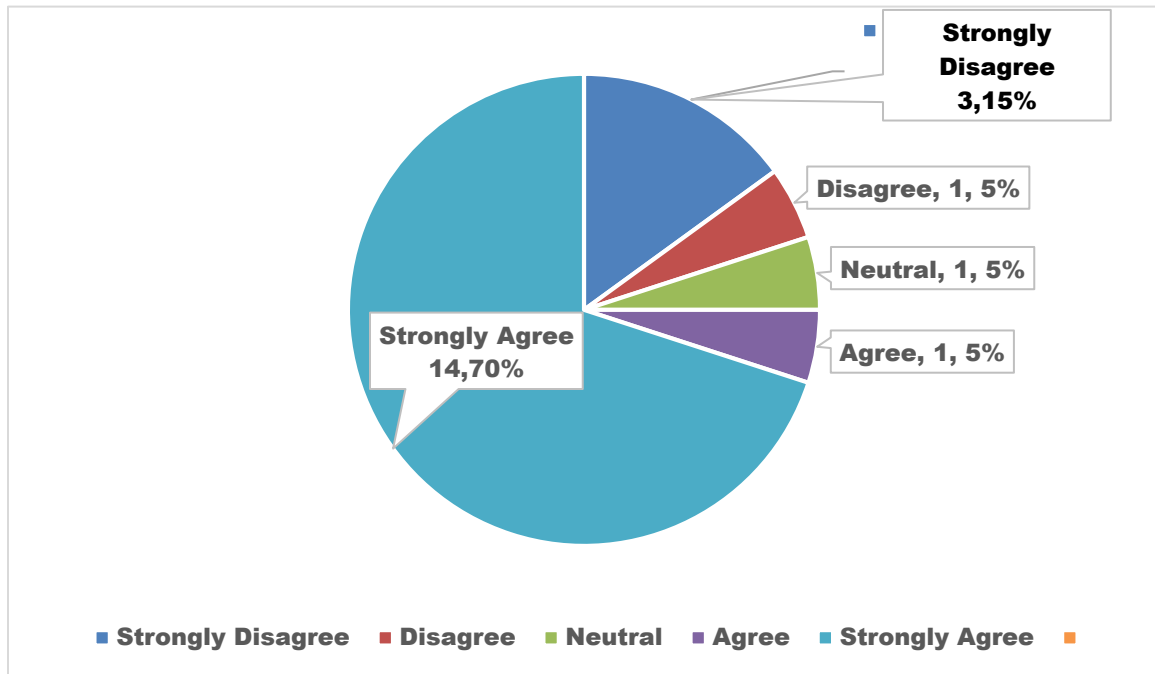


Figure 1.7. Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #4 Data

The pre-test respondents indicate that 14/ 70% strongly agree and 1/5 (15/20- or 75% respondents) strongly agree or—agree that these principles are inherent in the text of the implied notion of forgiveness even if the trespass continues. Part of the treatment underscores or emphasizes the idea that *Forgiveness* is always the solution even if the same thing happens to you over and over again. (However, you may want to learn to protect yourself better). Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.” Luke 17:4, NIV. The Bible tells us that we know that we have been forgiven when we can love again: Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. However, whoever has been forgiven little loves little.” Luke 7:47, NIV.

Forgiveness is always the solution when asked for, but we do not have to be doormats: So, watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and

seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.” Luke 17:3-4, NIV. When we do not forgive, we stay bonded to the harm. We continuously relive the harmful event.

Implication

We experience these associated feelings again and again. It creates stress in our lives and hardens our hearts. Our physical and psychological health get negatively impacted. Moreover, we destroy our relationships’ ability to love. By focusing on the past, we miss out on the present and the future. Overall, we ruin our lives and our future when we do not forgive. Forgiveness is deep and involved. Superficial work does not work. Lying does not work. The process requires decisions, actions, emotions, and trust. We can stumble in any of them. We need to be willing to let go.

- We need to be willing to go through all kinds of emotions.
- We need to go through the entire forgiveness process.
- There are several steps in the process.
- We need to deal with feelings.
- We need to deal with our responsibility.
- We need to keep going until we finished forgiving.
- We need to trust the process.

Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #5

3 John 1:1-3 outlines to us in Laurinburg SDA What ought to be going on in the context of God’s forgiveness of our sins (which is soul prosperity) as a condition or prerequisite

to holistic health and wellness? 3John1:1-3 Tells us the benefit to prosper the mind-body and soul? There is a strong relationship between Forgiveness of Sins (or soul prosperity) and holistic health and wellness in 3John, and this integration affects one's body, mind, and soul prosperity?

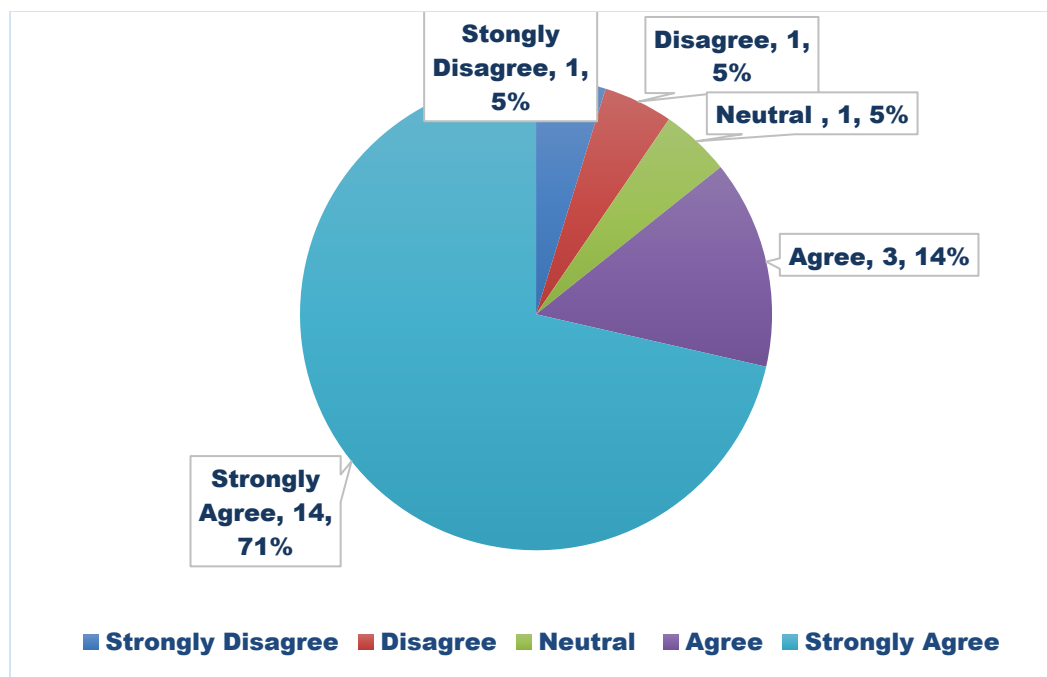


Figure 1.8. Post-Intervention-Treatment Question #5 Data

Part of the treatment entails understanding the Mind-body connection embedded in the text and affirmed by science why we need holistic wellness in Laurinburg to become optimum disciples and ambassadors for Christ.

When we get hurt, we form a bond with the offender and the offense. Forgiveness is the process of cutting the link created by harm, thus setting us free. What does it benefit to prosper the mind-body and soul? We need to do to others what we want to be done to us: Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be convicted. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Luke 6:37, NIV. Forgiveness is always the solution, even if the same thing happens to you over and over again. (However, you

may want to learn to protect yourself better). Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them." Luke 17:4, NIV. Forgiveness is always the solution when asked for, but we do not have to be doormats: So, watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them." Luke 17:3-4, NIV

When we do not forgive, we stay bonded to the harm. We continuously relive the harmful event. We experience the associated feelings again and again. It creates stress in our lives and hardens our hearts. Our physical and psychological health gets negatively impacted. Moreover, we destroy our relationships' ability to love. By focusing on the past, we miss out on the present and the future. Overall, we ruin our lives and our future when we do not forgive.

We are subject to stress hormones when we think about the harm we experienced. When we mull over the offense repeatedly, we continuously expose us to the stress hormones and their physical consequences. Our energy gets drained when we fight memories or try to cover them up. We are too tired to exercise or communicate with people. We isolate ourselves. The emotions we face from the hurt and the cover-up have psychological consequences. Forgiveness removes these consequences and restores our health.

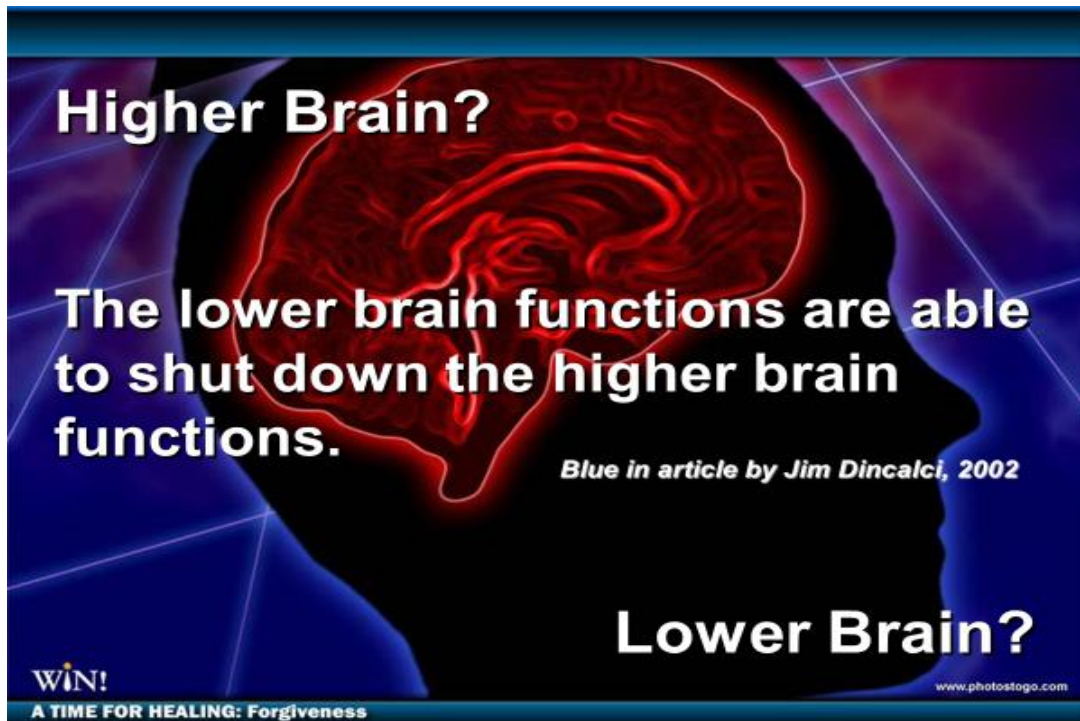


Figure 1.9. The Higher Brain and Lower Brain Under Stress

When we are angry and unforgiving, the Lower Brain can quickly shut down our Higher Brain, which affects our holistic wellness and healing. Most of us have had some emotional hurts in life. Some individuals process pain better than others. These treatment-intervention sessions provided information on forgiveness and holistic wellness, body, mind, soul, inspirational, thoughts, and suggestions for transformation, leading to emotional, physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellness healing.

The respondents clearly indicate after the treatment-intervention (14/%71 strongly agree and 3/%14 or cumulatively 85% agree) 3John1:1-2 what ought to be going on in the context of God's forgiveness and our sins (which is a part of the soul) prosperity as a condition prerequisite to holistic health and wellness. This reflects the %85 of respondents' scores went up after. This is a tremendous increase in the scores after employing the Biblical-hermeneutic of holistic wellness in an interdisciplinary way.

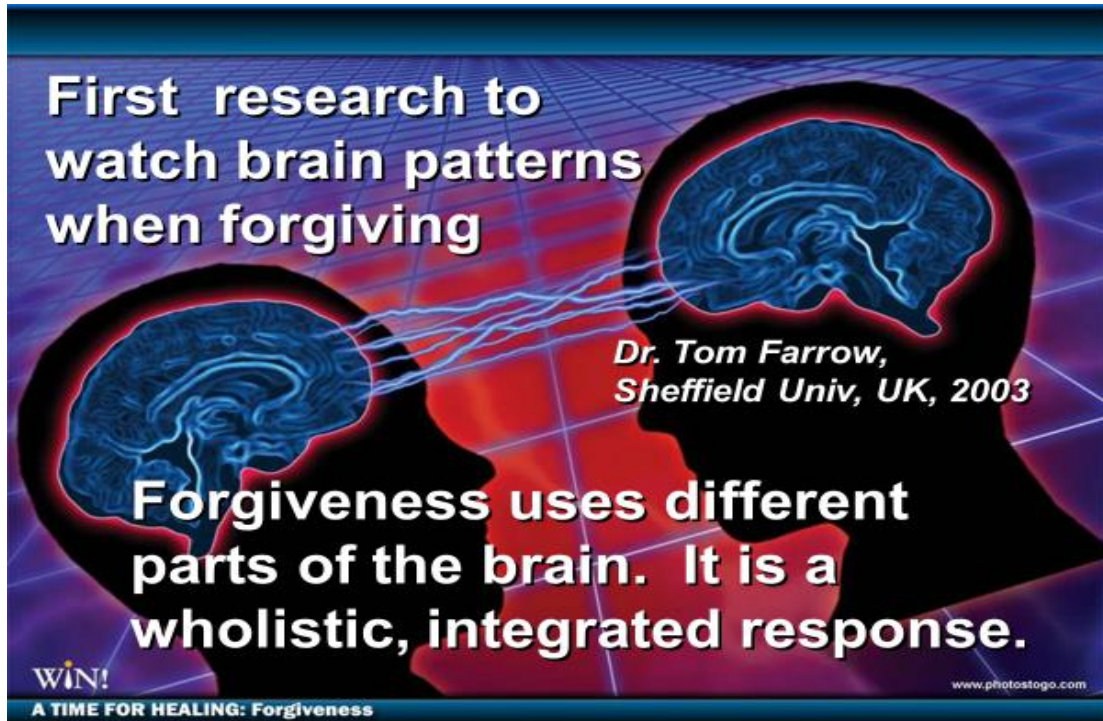


Figure 1.10. Watching Brain Patterns When Forgiving

Implications: Forgiveness is bearing the consequences of another's wrongdoing and letting the wrongdoer go free. True forgiveness is the beautiful fragrance that the flower sheds on the heel's heel who crushes it. Forgiveness "One person's heartfelt loving response to another person or people who have hurt the forgiver personally" Forgiveness is giving up all claims upon the one who has hurt you, including letting go of all the emotional consequences of the hurt. Some unkind words or acts that may affect our holistic wellness and healing unless we intentionally practice the biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness:

- Verbal or physical abuse
- Untrue statements
- Deprived of essentials of life
- Sexual abuse

- Unkind treatment
- Rejection
- Misunderstandings

These can cause bitterness, hostility, resentment, and anger. The cause and effect processes are destructive to us. We become captives. Our emotions and physical health are affected, and our productivity is slowed. Emotional healing needs to take place. Joy needs to return to our hearts. Why forgive to attain holistic healing and wellness? It stops the blame and pain cycle 2. It frees the one asking for it from responsibility and accountability.

Steps in Forgiving:

1. Process the hurts and identify any negative feelings of bitterness and anger, which could have a paralyzing grip on your life.
2. Decide if you want to have freedom from these negative emotional hurts. This process is a choice!
3. Tell God you surrender your hurts to Him. Say, "I have decided to be free of the past and get on with my life."
4. I have forgiven him/her. I am free. Thank You, Lord, for Your freedom and for taking care of things in Your own time and way.
5. Lord, I have made mistakes. Reveal to me those whom I have hurt. Help me to ask them to forgive me.

Ephesians 4:32: "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

Conclusion

My quest and aims were to employ the Interdisciplinary Foundation to integrate it into a holistic wellness framework to educate members for both disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise. Interdisciplinary education must supplement disciplinary teaching and learning so members can learn how to respond to challenges that transcend disciplines. Moreover, they have to work in the confluence of multiple disciplines and develop research trajectories that do not conform to standard disciplinary paths; and this is essential to this study in a Biblical Holistic Hermeneutic of Wellness in Psalm 103:1-5, 3John:1:1-2 in the Laurinburg project.

Interdisciplinary subjects are pivotal for this interdisciplinary education, teaching how to understand, navigate, and employ multiple and often contrary ways of knowing. In these subjects, students develop a meta-knowledge about different disciplines, methods, and epistemologies and learn how to purposefully and reflectively integrate and synthesize different perspectives to advance understanding and solve problems in the quest for holistic wellness, body (physical), mind (cognitive) emotional(affectively), social (interpersonal interactions with others in the body of Christ and in the community. Move beyond merely dietary, and health tenets in the Laurinburg SDA church to embrace a biblical hermeneutic of holistic wellness embody in Psalm 103:1-5 and 3John 1:1-2.

Members need to learn meta-disciplinary skills, attitudes, and understandings if they are to make these interdisciplinary moves and produce the integrative structures to facilitate holistic Biblical health and wellness. Teaching these explicitly is essential because members are unlikely to have learned them previously, given the concentration on disciplinary teaching in much of the education system.

The Bible reveals God's interest in health for the body, mind, social, and emotional, not just for the soul. More than any other major group, Seventh-day Adventists have explored and embraced the Bible's message about health. How did we come to have a theology of health? Furthermore, what are the main elements of it, as found in Scripture?

Like people who accept the Bible as the revealed Word of God, we base our theology of health on divine revelation. A theology of health should reveal God's plan about healthful living for the human race. However, in Laurinburg SDA, we are more interested in dietary reforms and not a holistic synergistic effect of reform of body, mind, cognitive, emotional, social wellness. This thesis advances the notion of holistic wellness, body, mind, emotions, socially, spiritually.

Strategies to Implement Holistic Health-Wellness

1. Churches should apply biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness, training, and methods to grow continuously. The churches may grow continually if they use biblical hermeneutic tenets of holistic health, training, and strategies for pursuing church growth.

2. Churches need well-balanced, growing, and holistic wellness. Although worship, small group ministry, and children ministry are essential to church growth, other factors should be developed together. The development of Biblical hermeneutic wellness, personal spirituality, and the expansion of God's kingdom still leave much to be desired.

3. Churches should strive for practical and biblical hermeneutics of holistic wellness of education development. We need to see how the Biblical Hermeneutic

principles of holistic wellness education at church influence its maturity and growth. The programs should be managed effectively, not be operated in name only. The plans should be made to prevent a biased view, addressed systematically, and proceed step by step for holistic education.

The Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness programs should also support training, modeling, and resources in different age groups.

4. Small group ministry should be changed for reproduction. Although people are well educated, fellowship, and share at church, little time is devoted to evangelism and reproduction. In many small group ministries, the ministry of Bible study, fellowship, and small group serving is active. Still, it needs to extend the ministry of Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness to evangelism, discipling, training leadership, and systematic training program.

5 Churches should be transformed as a vision-driven church that implements the Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness. The growing churches have clear vision statements of how they will implement the Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness. The church should have a clear vision statement of what Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness are and share it often with members.

6. The church should be developed as a praying church. The more churches take more time to pray the Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness, the faster churches grow.

7. Church should develop Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness for personal spiritual gifts. People attend service actively, but they did not fully use their spiritual gifts, it means their gifts have not been found or developed well at church. The

church should help them find their spiritual gifts by experiencing the core Biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness and develop them.

The goal is that the members become the “*living human hermeneutic document of holistic wellness*.” That is my prayer and objective, by His grace!

Churches should apply biblical hermeneutic principles of holistic wellness, training, and methods to grow continuously. The development of Biblical hermeneutic wellness, personal spirituality, and the expansion of God’s kingdom still leave much to be desired. Churches should strive for practical and biblical hermeneutics of holistic wellness of education development. The Biblical hermeneutics principles of holistic wellness programs should also support training, modeling, and resources in different age groups.

To enhance the ministry, Biblical hermeneutic of holistic wellness principles must be implemented evangelism, discipling, training leadership, and systematic training program. The goal is that the members become the “*living human hermeneutic document of holistic wellness*.” That is my prayer and objective, by His grace!

APPENDIX A

TREATMENT INTERVENTION 3 JOHN 1:1-2

Treatment Intervention 3 John 1:1-2

3 John 1:2: above all things—(Greek), "concerning all things": Of course, since his soul's prosperity is presupposed, "above all things" does not imply that John wishes Gaius' bodily health above that of his soul, but as the first object to be desired next after spiritual health. I know you are prospering in the concerns of your soul. I wish you similar prosperity in your body.

Perhaps John had heard from the brethren (3 John 1:3) that Gaius was in bad health, and was tried in other ways (3John 1:10), to which they wish, 3John 1:2, refers to:

- ☐ Prosper—in general.
- ☐ Be in health—in particular. Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things: The word for flourishing means "to have a good journey." It metaphorically means to succeed or thrive. It is like saying, "I hope things go well for you."

“Both verbs [for prosper and be in health] belonged to the everyday language of letter writing." This phrase is so common that sometimes it was condensed into only initials, and everyone knew what the writer meant just from the initials.

Of course, we should always remember that God wants our best and plans only good for us. Often present temporal material prosperity and physical health are part of that good He has for us — and this prosperity and health are promised as the ultimate destiny of all believers.

- ☐ However, for the present time, God may — according to His all-wise plan – use a lack of material prosperity and physical health to promote greater prosperity and health in the scale of eternity.
- ☐ Nevertheless, some live-in poverty and disease simply because they do not seek God's best, follow God's principles, and walk-in faith. As well, some others say we should use God's general promises of blessing as a way to indulge a carnal desire for ease, comfort, and luxury.
- ☐ Just as your soul prospers: John here made an analogy between the condition of our health and the disease of our soul. Many Christians would be desperately ill if their physical health were instantly in the same state as their spiritual health.
- ☐ 3 John 1 The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth (NASB95).
- ☐ “The elder” is the articular nominative masculine singular substantive form of the adjective presbyters, which is the comparative form of presbus, “an old man” and denotes “an older man.”
- 3 John 1 The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth (NASB95).

- ☐ “The elder” is the articular nominative masculine singular substantive form of the adjective *presbuteros*, which is the comparative form of *presbus*, “an old man” and denotes “an older man.”
- ☐ “The beloved” is the articular dative masculine singular form of the adjective. *Agapetos*. Classical and LXX Usage of *Agapetos* is a verbal adjective from *agapao*. In classical Greek, it commonly describes “that with which one must be content,” and often refers to only children.
- ☐ It is used as if a child to whom all the love of his parents is given. When used of things, the word means “desirable,” and when used of persons, it means “beloved.” It is employed in letters as a term of address. There are 15 canonical texts that the word is used in the Septuagint and six others.
- ☐ *Agapetos* is used seven times for the Hebrew word *yachidh*, “only.” It is employed five times for the Hebrew term *you*, “beloved.” The word is coupled with *monogenes* in Judges 11:34, meaning “only, unique.” It is found in Amos 8:10 and Jeremiah 6:26.
- ☐ 1 John 3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. (NASB)
- ☐ In 3 John 1, the adjective *Agapetos*, “beloved” serves as a reminder to Gaius that he is the beneficiary and object of the Father’s love, the Son’s and the Spirit’s. The divine love of God the Father expressed itself in eternity when He designed the Incarnation Plan for the Son to execute to provide salvation for all humanity (Jn 3:16-18; Eph 1:3-14).
- ☐ The divine love of God the Son expressed itself in eternity past when He volunteered His services to execute the Incarnation Plan of God the Father (Heb 10:5-9). The Lord Jesus's divine-love expressed itself when He voluntarily denied Himself the independent function of His divine attributes. He refused himself to die a spiritual and physical death on the cross as a substitute for all humankind (Phil 2:5-11).
- ☐ The divine love of the Trinity expressed itself in providing for the believer three categories of grace provision: (1) “Antecedent” grace: Election, Predestination, and Eternal inheritance (2) “Living” grace: The spiritual life of the believer. (3) “Eschatological” grace: Resurrection body and rewards for faithfulness

3 John 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper and be in good health in all respects, just as your soul prospers (NASB). This verse is composed of the following: First, it is a vocative masculine singular form of the adjective *Agapetos*, “beloved.” Second, preposition *peri*, “in...respects.” Third, it is a genitive neuter plural form of the adjective *pas*, “all,” and is the first person singular present middle indicative form of the verb *euchomai*, “I pray.” Fifth, it is second person genitive singular form of the personal pronoun *su*, “you” and is a present passive infinitive form of the verb *euodoomai* (μαι), “that may prosper.”

- □ .” The conjunction *kai* “and” present active infinitive form of the verb *hugiaino*, “be in good health.” The adverb *kathos*, “just as” is a third-person singular current passive indicative form of the verb—*euodoomai*, “prosper” is a genitive second person particular form of the personal pronoun *su*, “your.” The articular nominative feminine singular form of the *psuche* is the word “soul. It is emphatic about underscoring the Love of God.”
- □ In classical Greek, the verb demonstrates a wide range of meanings. It most often means, “To offer prayer, pray that,” and with this, the importance “vow.” Sometimes it can mean “to boast, profess loudly.” In the Septuagint, the verb often means “to make a vow” (Deut 12:11) and can also mean “to pray” (Jb 42:10; Jer 7:16), and only once does the word mean “to wish” (Jer 22:27).
- □ The verb *euodoomai* means “to prosper” in the temporal realm in contrast to the spiritual realm, which is denoted by the phrase “just as your soul prospers.” This verb refers to Gaius's material and financial well-being in contrast to the spiritual realm of prospering materially and financially. It relates to Gaius' temporal needs and not lusts being met.
- □ The present tense of the verb is a customary or stative present referring to a steady-state. Thus, this tense refers to the state or condition of prospering in the temporal realm. The verb's passive voice means that the subject receives the verb's action by either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here God's agency to perform the healing is unexpressed but is emphatically an apposition or referent to God.
- □ Thus, the passive indicates that John prays that Gaius would receive the action of being prospered in the temporal realm by God. The infinitive form of this verb *euodoomai* is an infinitive of purpose. This means that it is indicating the purpose of the action of its controlling verb. It is answering the question as to “why” John prayed for Gaius.
- □ Robert W. Yarbrough, *1-3 John, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: MI: Academic, A Division of Baker Publishing, 2008), 367.
- □ The meaning of *Peri Panton* in this text is fascinating. The neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* is functioning as a substantive. This adjective means “all things.” It refers to God's various temporal blessings, such as food, shelter, and clothing, which are essential to support human life in the first century A.D. to execute the Father's plan for one's life.
- □ . This word is the object of the preposition *peri*, which is a marker of reference indicating that John is telling Gaius that he makes it a habit of praying for him to be prospered “with regards to all things” such as food, shelter, clothing, and transportation
- □ This prepositional phrase is in the strong position of this statement, emphasizing the full scope of John's prosperity for Gaius. The conjunction *kai* is adjunctive, meaning that it introduces a word that presents an “additional” item that John prayed to the Father

on behalf of Gaius. John made it his habit of praying that Gaius would be prospered with regards to all things “as well as” or “and also” his physical health.

- ☐ The verb *hugiaino* in classical Greek means “to be physically or mentally healthy or sound.” This idea of soundness extended to other areas as well, where it was used for stability in political or religious matters. It was used in the closing of letters and meant “goodbye.”
- ☐ Louw and Nida list two meanings: (1) the state of being healthy, well (in contrast with sickness) to be well, to be healthy. Moreover, to be correct in one’s views, with the implication of such a state being positively valued too be right, to be sound, to be accurate
- ☐ In 3 John 2, the verb *hugiaino* means "to be healthy" or "to be of sound health," referring to sound physical health. The present tense of the verb is a customary or stative present referring to a steady-state. Thus, this tense refers to the state or condition of being in good health.
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- ☐ The Holy Spirit acted upon Gaius when he lived his life utilizing truth due to obeying the Lord’s command. Particularly, to love his fellow Christian as Christ loves him. This is indicated by John’s statements in verses 3-6 in which John informs Gaius that he heard from other itinerant teachers of the gospel that he was demonstrating the love of God

Exposition of 3 John 2^[L]_{SEP}]

- ☐ Here in verse 2, John addresses Gaius again with the adjective *agapetos*, which the close personal relationship that existed between Gaius and those Christians. They testified to the apostle John that Gaius was walking in the truth. He is demonstrating God’s love to itinerant pastor-teachers and evangelists.
- ☐ This adjective *agapetos* also speaks of Gaius’ relationship to the Trinity. It designates Gaius as a Christian since it expresses that he was the recipient and beneficiary of God’s love. The adjective *agapetos* serves as a reminder to Gaius that he is the beneficiary and object of the Father’s love, the Son’s, and the Spirit’s.
- ☐ It would serve to remind Gaius that he was the beneficiary of God’s divine-love before conversion and is now the object of His love after transformation.
- ☐ In our day and age, the God of materialism rules, especially in America. In fact, for many, the American Dream is merely acquiring as many possessions as possible and

accumulating as much wealth as possible. For many, security and self-esteem are based upon controls and how much money one has in their bank account. Unfortunately, this attitude, which is promoted by Satan's cosmic system, has infected the church.

- ☐ The verb *euodoomai* means “to prosper” in the temporal realm in contrast to the spiritual realm, which is denoted by the phrase “just as your soul prospers.” This verb refers to Gaius's material and financial well-being in contrast to the spiritual realm of prospering materially and financially. It relates to Gaius' temporal needs and not lusts being met.
- ☐ The verb *hugiaino* in classical Greek means “to be physically or mentally healthy or sound.” This idea of soundness extended to other areas as well, where it was used for fitness in political or religious matters. It was used in the closing of letters and meant “goodbye.” The word occurs 24 times in the Septuagint, where it virtually occurs in some form of greeting. It appears 12 times in the New Testament.
- ☐ The phrase rendered “above all things” - *περὶ πάντων peri pantōn*- would be more correctly rendered here “concerning, or in respect to all things;” and the idea is, that John wished earnestly that “in all respects” he might have the same kind of prosperity which his soul had. The standard translation “above all things” would seem to mean that John valued health and outward prosperity more than he did anything else; that he wished that more than his usefulness or salvation.
- The sense is, “In every respect, I wish that it may go as well with you as it does with your soul; that in your worldly prosperity, your comfort, and your bodily health, you may be as prosperous as you are in your religion.” This concept of holistic prosperity is the reverse of the wish which we are commonly constrained to express for our friends; for such is usually the comparative want of wealth and advancement in their spiritual interests, that it is an expression of benevolence to desire that they might prosper in that respect as much as they do in others.
- ☐ That thou mayest prosper—*εὐοδοῦσθαι euodousthai*. This word occurs in the New Testament only in the following places: Romans 1:10, rendered “have a prosperous journey;” 1 Corinthians 16: 2, generated “hath prospered;” and in the passage before us. It means, appropriately, “to lead in a good way; to prosper one's journey;” and then to make prosperous; to give success to; to be prospered.
- ☐ It would apply here to any plan or purpose entertained. It would include success in business, happiness in domestic relations, or prosperity in any of the engagements and transactions a Christian might lawfully engage. It shows that it is right to wish that our friends may succeed in the works of their hands and their plans of life.

- ☐ And be in health—To enjoy bodily health. To a correct interpretation of this, it is not necessary to suppose that Gaius was at that time suffering from bodily indisposition, though perhaps it is most natural to believe that, as John makes the wish for his health, so prominent. But it is common, in all circumstances, to wish for our friends' health and prosperity, and it is as proper as it is expected if we do not give that a degree of prominence above the welfare of the soul.
- ☐ John had learned, it would seem, from the “brethren” who had come to him, 3 John 1:3, that Gaius was living as became a Christian; that he was advancing in the knowledge of the truth, and was exemplary in the duties of the Christian life; and he prays that in all other respects he might be prospered as much as he was in that. It is not very common that a man is more flourished in his spiritual interests than he is in his other parts, or that we can, in our wishes for the welfare of our friends, make the prosperity of the soul, and the practice and enjoyment of religion, the standard of our desires concerning other things.
- ☐ It argues a high state of holiness when we can express our strongest desire for our friends' welfare and express the hope that they may be in all respects as much prospered as they are in their spiritual concerns.

Psalm 32

“A Psalm of David. A Contemplation. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered” (NKJV)

Psalm 32

- ☐ David wrote it
- ☐ written out of the guilt that he had in adultery with Bathsheba/murder of Uriah
- ☐ stresses that life away from God's forgiveness is miserable
- ☐ encourages others to confess to God

The Blessed One Is the Forgiven One

SIN:

- ☐ missing the mark
- ☐ aiming to miss the mark
- ☐ transgression of law
- ☐ rebellion against the Lord
- ☐ wander from the way
- omission
- commission
- ☐ **Transgression** – passing over a boundary
- ☐ **Sin** – missing a mark
- ☐ **Iniquity** – perverted or distorted
- ☐ **Deceit** – fraud, guile
- ☐ The Blessed One Confesses
- ☐ The Blessed One Instructs Others

APPENDIX B

TREATMENT INTERVENTION PSALM 103:1-5

Treatment Intervention Psalm 103:1-5

It also combines elements of the individual and the communal, as we have seen: Each of the three stanzas has its distinct perspective; individual, collaborative, and universal. The call to bless the Lord in Psalm 103:1b–2 functions as a summons to praise.

The first and most crucial point underlines in an OT theology of health, sickness, and healing is that God himself created the first human beings, Adam and Eve (Gen 1-2). Therefore, as the human body designer, God thoroughly understands its workings, as David pointed out: For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

- In the Song of Moses, God proclaims himself to be the only all-powerful God: "I put to death, and I bring to life, I have wounded, and I will heal" (Deut 32:39). The "wounding" may be part of God's discipline," but the healing also comes from the same Almighty God, as further evidence of the caring relationship he maintains with his creation.
- "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians. for I am the LORD, who heals you" (Ex 15:26).
- Moses took Yahweh at his word and called upon him to heal his sister Miriam of her leprosy, which God did (Num 12:13). David, the psalmist, described God as the one who "heals all your diseases"(Ps 103:3).
- The prophet Elisha prayed to the Lord, and the Shunammite's son was raised from the dead (2 Kings 4:32-35). According to the OT evidence, God can and does heal; but it should be noted that death still "reigned" (in the apostle Paul's terms), for God did not always choose to heal.
- One of the psalmists' enlarged the idea of healing to include dimensions other than the physical, when he spoke of the Lord as the one who "heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds" (Ps 147:3).
- King Solomon, in his prayer of dedication for the temple, said that if "God's people would turn to him in humility and repentance, then God would "hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chron 7:14)
- Once again, the accent is on the right relationship to God as a precondition for candidacy for the universe's sovereign Ruler's healing activity. God may not always grant healing, but being in the right relationship with him is the first step God asks of his people.
- In the prophets, healing was frequently linked with the social, political, and spiritual aspects of life. Hosea 14:4 promised spiritual blessings to the repentant: "I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them."

- In the same book, God described his relationship with his people as that of healing them (Hos 1:1,3),
- which, in the context, is perhaps a reference to delivering them socially and politically from slavery in Egypt.
- In Jeremiah, we find the language of curing and restoring being used for the spiritual relationship that Israel (Jer 3:22) and Jeremiah himself (Jer 15:19) had with God. "Healing" is needed to choose the right values in life, as Jeremiah seems to say in the context of chapter 17.
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- When his life is half gone, they will desert him, and in the end, he will prove to be a fool O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD, the spring of living water. Heal me, O!LORD, and I will be healed; save me, and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise (Jer 17:5, 7, 11, 13)
- In the context of the messianic age and restoration, God spoke of binding up his people's bruises and healing the wounds he had inflicted (Isa 30:26). In that time of eschatological redemption, physical healing would characterize the Messiah's activities:
- Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy (Isa 35:5).
- The Suffering Servant of Yahweh prepared the way, bearing the punishment that was due to others: Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, and he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds, we are healed (Isa 53:4).
- At that final glorious time, the year of the Lord's favor, there would be a joy instead of the sadness that surrounds those who suffer. God himself would act through his Servant: The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
- He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor.... (Isa 61:1). This favor would include the physical well-being of God's people, according to Isaiah's description of life in the new Jerusalem in the Age to Come:

- Never again in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an older man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed (Isa. 65: 20). In the Age to Come, the ransomed of the Lord expect to enjoy all that he has prepared for them. Indeed, even the curse of Eden will be reversed
- God is thus described with a definite participle of **רָפָא**, "to heal." The concepts of forgiveness in 103:3a and healing in 103:3b are meant to influence each other mutually and reciprocally, as they stand in explicit parallelism. The so-called hymnic participles of 103:3–5 are also typical of hymns.
- According to Brueggemann, Psalms 86:5; 103:3; and 130:4 focus on forgiveness as a characteristic feature of the Lord. In Psalm 86:5, the poet reminds the Lord that he is good and ready to forgive (**טוֹב וְ סָלַח**). The verbal adjective implies that being prepared to forgive is a divine attribute, not only a mode of action.
- In Psalm 130, the psalmist recognizes that if God kept a full record of humanity's sins, no one would stand (130:3). However, the "derives comfort from the known character of Yahweh as a God who forgives (cf. Ps 86:15): this divine quality transcends human sinfulness."
- Psalm 130:4 insists that "But with you is forgiveness (**כִּי יִיעָמְדְּ הַסְּלִיחָה**), so that you may be feared." We saw above that forgiveness and healing are linked in Psalm 103:3 among the passages presenting forgiveness as a characteristic feature of the Lord.
- While Psalm 103:3–5 may be read as a thanksgiving for a specific event, the section simultaneously transcends those particular circumstances. Participles dominate the division. Participles share something of the nature of adjectives and represent actions as durative in aspect.
- In Psalm 103:3b, the Lord is described as **הָרָפָא לְכָל־ תַּחֲלָאִיכִי**, "[the one] who heals all your diseases." God is thus described with a definite participle of **רָפָא**, "to heal." The concepts of forgiveness in Psalm 103:3a and healing in Psalm 103:3b are meant to influence each other, as they stand in explicit parallelism.
- This parallel illustrates the close relationship between forgiveness and healing in the language of the Psalter. A pertinent example of this phenomenon is Psalm 41:5b: "heal me (**רַפֵּאָה נַפְשִׁי**), for I have sinned against you
- In Psalm 107, a hymn, section 107:17–22 recounts how some of "them" (the redeemed of the Lord from 107:2) were saved from their distress and healed by the Lord (107:19–20). Forgiveness is not mentioned, but the healing and saving work of the Lord implies that they had been forgiven because their "sinful ways" and their iniquities are listed as the cause of their affliction (Ps 107:17).

- "There is no soundness in my flesh because of your indignation; there is no welfare in my bones because of my sin" (Ps38:4). The psalmist asks for neither forgiveness nor healing in this Psalm, but he does confess his iniquity and sin (38:19). The Psalm ends on a prayer that the Lord must not abandon the psalmist and that he must make haste to help him (Ps 38:22–23).
- It is safe to assume that the help will include healing from the ailments caused by sin. At the start of the Psalm, the psalmist also pleads for a reprieve from God's reprove and discipline, driven by God's wrath (Ps 38:2).
- We have seen that the connection between forgiveness and healing is not unique to our Psalm, though these concepts seldom stand in such an exact parallel as they do in Psalm 103. We also take with us the insight from Psalm 32 that the sickness experienced by the Psalm may be a poetic metaphor for suffering due to sin.
- The psalmist's praise of the Lord in psalm103:3–5 may be elicited by the healing of actual sickness, which is experienced as a series of life-renewing gifts. However, the praise for healing may also be a metaphorical expression of the joy of being forgiven.
- In Psalm 103:3, we saw the interaction between forgiveness and healing. In Psalm103:3, we know the concept of recovery is extended into "redemption from death," as God is described as **הַגּוֹצֵל מִן שְׁחַת חַי יְיָ**, "[the one] who redeems your life from the Pit." In the language of the Psalter, to be sick was to be already within the sphere of death.
- In 6:6, he entices and appeals to God to help him: He reminds God that none remembers him in death and asks rhetorically, "who praises you in Sheol?" The enemies of the psalmist in Psalm. Forty-one seem to assume that the psalmist will (or should) promptly die (Ps 41:6, 9).
- In Psalm 107:18, "they" came to the gates of death before they called out to the Lord. When he healed them, he saved them from destruction (Ps 107:20). God's deep commitment to his covenant people was expressed with this term of healing and forgiveness.
- The healing of Psalm103:3b is cogently meant to stand in parallel with the forgiveness motif of psalm103:3a. These concepts are thus consciously tied together by the poet. The healing in Psalm103:3b is also closely connected to redemption from death in 103:4a. Thus, the forgiveness motif interacts also with deliverance from death by extension.
- The forgiveness motif's placement at the head of this list renders it foundational for the rest of the benefits list. Mays support this claim: The list of the Lord's dealing in verses 3–5 comprises parts of one process. They all stand under the rubric 'forgive' in the first clause and flow from that.

- In sequence, they outline the course of forgiveness that heals, redeems life from threatening death, so adorning life with steadfast love and mercy and making it possible to experience life as good—with the result that life is renewed.
- In the associational cluster of the forgiveness motif in Psalm 10, it is vital to understand how forgiveness is presented in Psalm 103. The psalmist experiences forgiveness as a healing and life-renewing experience.
- El Shaddai All-Sufficient One, Lord God Almighty
- *El Elyon* in the Septuagint: *ho theos ho subsists* — the God most
- *Adonai* in the Septuagint: *kurios* — Lord, Master .
Meaning and Derivation: *Adonai* is the verbal parallel to *Yahweh* and *Jehovah*. *Adonai* is plural; the singular is *adon*. About God, the plural *Adonai* is used.
- *Yahweh* in the Septuagint: *kurios* — Lord, Master
despotês — Lord, the Master, denoting the omnipotence of God (TDNT), despot, absolute Ruler
- *Jehovah Nissi* in the Septuagint: *kurios kataphugê mou* — the Lord is my refuge
Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief purpose of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" — this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly.
- *Jehovah-Raah* in the Septuagint: *kurios poimainei me* — the Lord shepherds me
Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief purpose of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" means "shepherd" in Hebrew.
- *Jehovah Rapha* in the Septuagint: *kurios ho iômenos se* — the Lord, your healer

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief purpose of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" people.
- *Jehovah Shammah* in the Septuagint: *estai to onoma autês* — the name thereof.

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief purpose of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly.

- *Jehovah Mekoddishkem* in the Septuagint: *kurios ho hagiazôn humans* — the Lord that sanctifies you .

Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief purpose of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist."

- *El Olam* the Septuagint: *[ho] theos [ho] aiônios* — the everlasting God.

Meaning and Derivation: *El* is another name translated as "God" and can be used in conjunction with other words to designate various aspects of God's character. *Olam* derives from the root word *'lm* (which means "eternity"). *Olam* means "forever," "eternity," or "everlasting."

- *Elohim*, in the Septuagint: *theos* — the standard Greek word for God, "a transcendent being who exercises extraordinary control in human affairs or is responsible for a bestowal of unusual benefits." It specifically refers to the monotheistic God of Israel.

- *Qana* in the Septuagint: *zêlôtês* — jealous Meaning and Derivation: *Qanna* is translated as "jealous," "zealous," or "envy." The fundamental importance relates to a marriage relationship.

- *Jehovah Sabaoth* in the Septuagint: *kurios sabaôth* — the Lord of hosts (*sabaôth*: Gr. transliteration of Heb. "hosts") Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist." It also suggests "to become" or specifically "to become known" - this denotes a God who reveals Himself unceasingly.

- *Jehovah-Shalom* in the Septuagint: *eirênê kuriou* — peace of the Lord

Meaning and Derivation: Meaning and Derivation: *Jehovah* is translated as "The Existing One" or "Lord." The chief meaning of *Jehovah* is derived from the Hebrew word *Havah* meaning "to be" or "to exist."

- Vickie Winans: More Than Enough

<https://youtube.1NCJCtBoyII>.

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